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The perspectives of female Emirati pre-service teachers on the use of English as a
medium of instruction: An ethnographic investigation

by Melanie Mathilde Elizabeth van den Hoven

a thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirement of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

School of Education

Durham University



October 2016

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List of Abbreviations

ADEA	Abu Dhabi educational authority
AMI	Arabic as a medium of instruction
CEPA	Common Educational Proficiency Assessment
EAL	English as an additional language
EFL	English as a foreign language
EIL	English as an international language
ELF	English as a lingua franca
ELT	English language teaching
EMI	English as a medium of instruction
EMT	English-Medium Teacher
ESL	English as a second language
FG	Focus group
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
II	Individual interviews
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
NEST	Native English-speaking teacher
NNEST	Non-Native English-Speaking Teacher
NSC	New School Curriculum
PS	Preliminary study
TTC	Teacher training college
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TIRF	The International Research Foundation for English Language Education
UAE	United Arab Emirates

Declaration

No material contained in the thesis has previously been submitted for a degree in this or any other institution.

Several publications have resulted from this research study and have been duly referenced. They include:

van den Hoven, M. (2014a, April 8-10, 2014). *An exploration of the use of English by Arabic-speaking Emirati pre-service teachers: Locating English as a medium of instruction* Paper presented at the The fifth annual Comparative Education Society Symposium - Locating the national in the international: Comparative perspectives on language, identity, policy, and practice, Dubai Women's College, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

van den Hoven, M. (2014b). The use of English for Education in the Arab world. In K. Bailey & R. Damerow (Eds.), *Teaching and learning English in the Arabic-speaking world* (pp. 65-82). New York: Routledge.

van den Hoven, M., & Carroll, K. (2017). Emirati pre-service teachers' perspectives on language: Abu Dhabi's rich linguistic context. In L. Buckingham (Ed.), *Language, Identity and Education on the Arabian Gulf Peninsula* (pp. 39-58). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to Sheikh Nahayan bin Mubarak Al Nahayan for his vision of furthering English language education in the Arab World through providing financial support for researchers focusing on issues affecting Arabic-speaking learners of English. I personally feel blessed by your generosity and foresight and stand as a proud recipient of the 2010 Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship. I would also like to express my gratitude to Dr. Kathleen Bailey on behalf of The International Research Foundation for English Language Education (TIRF) for her enduring support to me personally and for her far-reaching vision in building an emerging community of scholars. I would also like to appreciate Ryan Damerow for his faithfulness and commitment in helping manifest this vision. In addition, I would like to thank Dr. Prudence Holmes for her kind and honest feedback. You are an inspiration to me. I feel blessed that you became my supervisor and supported my progression in the programme across its many phases. I am also thankful for Prof Carl Bagley for his involvement in the early days of the research setting, quiet support and faith in my capacity to make the most of my Durham University experience. Special thanks also go to Brett Bowie for his on-demand editing services and faithfulness to my long-term goal and our long-term vision.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Preview of the study

The promotion of English from a foreign language to a medium of instruction in Abu Dhabi is nested in a “Rags to Riches” story (Al-Fahim, 2006) featuring four and a half decades of oil wealth, massive societal changes and educational transformation (Davidson, 2009). In 1971, formal education began in Abu Dhabi with the establishment of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a federation of seven emirates. Opportunities for higher education (HE) in the Abu Dhabi emirate first appeared in 1977. Within four decades, there have been striking educational achievements around language and literacy, which include the use of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) and the promise of full access for Emirati women (Fox, 2008).

A construction boom of hundreds of schools beginning in the late 1970s helped achieve literacy in Arabic for the majority of the population (Davidson, 2010). Currently, government schools and their curricula are being overhauled with a focus upon achieving bi-literacy in Arabic and English for Emirati youth because of the important role English plays as a medium of instruction in HE (Badri & Al Khaili, 2014). Together with Emiratisation processes, these educational reforms have provided the impetus for hundreds of Emirati women in the Abu Dhabi emirate to study in English and certify as English Medium Teachers (EMTs) at a teacher training college (TTC) in Abu Dhabi. As a result, in 2008, there were fresh opportunities for Emirati women to master English and learn to teach in English in the emirate’s government schools and for educated expatriates from around the world to design and deliver courses about how to teach

English, mathematics and science in English. While the growth of English-medium education internationally is regarded as an important trend (Dearden, 2014), the use of English in HE has been in place and relatively uncontested in the UAE for several decades. However, recent concerns over changing patterns of Arabic use in this context suggest the need for more research addressing societal bilingualism in the Arab world (Al-Khatib, 2006). This study explores the complex and diverse ways English is conceptualised and used by Emirati pre-service teachers during this dynamic phase of educational reforms.

Within an Arabian context characterised by dynamic change, conceptions of English and how it should be used in relation to Arabic have, undoubtedly, shifted in status and focus. Various labels of English, such as English as a foreign language (EFL), English as a second language (ESL) and also English as an international language (EIL) appear as descriptors denoting how English functions in society. Originating in language education discourses, such labels, when applied to the various educational domains in this context, inform understandings of English language teaching and learning. However, many underlying assumptions about the use of English should be closely examined and documented. Simply put, these include: What does English mean to the various users of English in their local contexts? Who speaks English to whom, where, when, why and how? What other social influences affect these meanings and practices? As argued by Seargeant (2010), labels and meanings given to the conceptual entity of English are based on the selection and exclusion of certain features and highlight particular concepts of language use which contain “presuppositions about human agency and society” (p. 109). Hence, this investigation of understandings of English also explores social influences in the form of daily face-to-face conversational practices that Emirati females report experiencing.

Such information is pertinent for understanding of English in an otherwise Arabic-speaking context. The 16 participants featured in this study are among the first wave of Emirati women who are being educated to teach using EMI in the emirate's government schools.

1.2. The context of the study

This section sets the scene of the humble beginnings of education in Abu Dhabi to characterise the rapid pace of educational development that follows. This section contextualises my study within dramatic curricular reforms and locates Emirati pre-service teachers in the midst of the changing status of English from a subject of study to a medium of instruction. It also offers some parameters for distinguishing Abu Dhabi as a unique context in the Arabian Gulf for EMI research. The purpose of this section is to show how the research questions emerged from the particular features of the research setting and my analysis of the EMI research base.

1.2.1. The advent of English language education in Abu Dhabi

In Abu Dhabi, formal education began four and a half decades ago with the establishment of the UAE, a federation of seven emirates with an Islamic constitution. In 1971, the “make-shift union” (Davidson, 2009, p. 60), also described as a monarchy with “autocratic structures,” (Davidson, 2005, p. 65) established that Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al Nahyan from the Abu Dhabi emirate would head the newly-formed government. Unlike other contexts where EMI is well-documented, this former British protectorate, although guided by “British tutelage,” (Heard-Bey, 2004, p. 337) was never regarded as a British colony. This distinction merits attention for highlighting that the use of English in Abu Dhabi is a unique social context which evades ready-

made classifications as “products of a specific evolutionary process tied directly to their colonial and postcolonial history” (Schneider, 2007, p. 3).

However, British interest in the region changed from primarily commercial to increasingly political. The 150 year-long “special relationship” (Maktoum, 2015) between the British and the local rulers is characterised as moving from “mutual trust ... [to] mutual mistrust” (Heard-Bey, 2004, pp. 307-308). It is via this intercultural link, however, that the English language was first taught to boys as a foreign language in 1964 in Sharjah (Heard-Bey, 2004, p. 331), a city to the north-east of Abu Dhabi. Despite advanced cultural developments in Sharjah and Dubai, Abu Dhabi was chosen as the capital city since its oil wealth could be used by the “embryonic” federal departments (Heard-Bey, 2004, p. 367) to fund much needed social services, such as roads, schools and hospitals. In 1978, HE opportunities for males and females began at a flagship university using Arabic as a medium of instruction (AMI) but, shortly thereafter, Arabic was replaced by English as a language of instruction for most subjects at the nation’s first federal university (Findlow, 2006). As such, since the outset of a federal education system English has served as the historical language of instruction.

1.2.2. Educational transformation in the Abu Dhabi emirate

The motives behind the rise of an autonomous educational authority for the Abu Dhabi emirate, separate from a federal Ministry of Education hosted in Dubai, three decades later, and an ensuing shift of English from a foreign language to an increasingly important medium of instruction are difficult and sensitive to unpack. According to a Dubai-based Ministry of Education official, there was no formal education in the UAE until the early 1960s (Al Taboor,

2008). Al-Fahim (2006), an Emirati author raised in Abu Dhabi during this period, chronicles his educational experiences in Abu Dhabi in crisper detail. He describes the inhabitants of this region as desperate for change in the 1950s and 1960s, surviving “from hand to mouth ... [and otherwise] caught unprepared, ill-equipped, poorly-educated and overwhelmed by the tidal wave of change that would eventually transform [their] lives forever” (p. 47). He also reports that 1950s schooling in Abu Dhabi was limited to a handful of male students reciting the Qur’an to village elders. The first non-religious school was opened in the 1960s: a rudimentary six-room building without electricity or teaching materials. In this period, the exclusive focus of lessons was page-by-page mastery of the Qur’an. Al Fahim’s narrative shows that the use of EMI also coincides with new ideas about the contents of learning and pedagogical approach.

1.2.3. Rapid expansion of schools and Arabic literacy

Following on from the export of oil, the advent of modern schooling put Abu Dhabi inhabitants on a rapid road to Arabic literacy. In 1953-54, there were only 230 students in Abu Dhabi; however, by 1972, a thousand-fold increase saw 32,862 students and the formal implementation of public schooling (Al Suwaidi, 2003). Twenty-five years later, there were over 300,000 students with 750 new public schools opened in 2004 (Clarke, 2006). The overall process of growth in public education has since been called “radical modernization” (Macpherson, Kachelhoffer, & El Nemr, 2007, p. 1), necessitating massive influxes of expatriate teachers. During this phase, the teachers were predominantly Arabic-speakers from Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Palestine, inadequately trained and on short-term contracts (Shaw, Badri, & Hukul, 1995). However, under the new reforms, English-speaking teachers from “the US, Canada,

Australia and the UK” (Lewis, 2009a, p. 7) have been brought in as a short term measure in preparation for the new face of teachers: Emirati women as citizens of the nation.

1.2.4. Inadequate preparation for higher education

The impressive rate of expansion of schooling, however, is mixed with critiques of inadequate resources and an over-reliance on imported curricula and expertise. Despite official reports of the visionary aims of education, there are critical reviews of the actual quality of educational reforms. Translated into English, one Arabic-language newspaper reported the problems within the “education crisis ... [are the] unsuitability of curricula, collapsing school buildings, and low salaries” (Macpherson et al., 2007, p. 2). The curricula, primarily focused on the Arabic language and Islamic religious studies, excluded the arts and social studies (Shaw et al., 1995). Furthermore, results in mathematics and science also described as grossly inadequate (Lewis, 2009b; Lewis & Dajani, 2009). In addition, high-school curricula have been criticised for failing to adequately prepare students for academic learning in higher education (Lewis, 2008). Having relied on imported curricula from Kuwait and Egypt (Lewis, 2009b; Lootah, 2011) and teachers from these and other neighbouring Arab countries for decades, often without teaching credentials (Shaw et al., 1995), dissatisfaction grew in Abu Dhabi with the curricular directives from the federal authority, which is based in Dubai. Subsequent tensions between Abu Dhabi and Dubai emerged but without open discussion in the media, pointing to a narrative not for public scrutiny.

1.2.5. Increased opportunities for intercultural interaction

In describing the national development of education and its commitment to Islamic practices and Arab ideals, Clarke (2008) points out that Arabic was established as the medium of instruction in HE and English was only introduced as a foreign language for primary school students in 1985. During this period English was largely taught by Arabic-speaking English teachers. Until 2001, there were only three federal HEIs in Abu Dhabi - all featuring EMI. The 2008 expansion in HE also entailed recruiting teachers from English-speaking countries. The presence of teachers who cannot speak Arabic likely represents a certain novelty for the current generation of HE students. With few options to study in Arabic, attending college and university in the UAE HE means radical changes to language and patterns of interaction. Particularly for Emirati students from government schools, where Arabic was the sole medium of instruction until very recently, studying in HE not only features increased opportunities for intercultural communication in English but also adapting to communication about educational performance in English. In short, studying in HE offers Emirati students new experiences interacting in English with non-Arabic speaking teachers.

1.2.6. Curricular changes for the Abu Dhabi emirate

A breakdown in the central authority of the Ministry of Education, based in Dubai, suggests that Abu Dhabi leaders view English as an urgent necessity for other Emiratis living in this emirate, the seat of federal power. In a rush to overhaul educational standards within the emirate, a break from the federal educational authority in Dubai was initiated in 2005. Longstanding concerns regarding student preparation for HE and the workplace vis-a-vis

inadequate curricula and resources explain the recent redefinition of “the emirate’s educational priorities” (Fox, 2008, p. 118). Although Skeikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, as president of the UAE and ruler of Abu Dhabi, is credited for guiding the new vision (ADEC, 2013b), his younger brother and Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan is known as central to two key educational initiatives: the formation of a new Abu Dhabi educational authority (ADEA) and a number of public non-federal and private HEIs. The increased use of English is underscored in these ADEA initiatives. In 2009, a stand alone teacher training college (TTC) emerged as an English-medium HEI readied to prepare Emirati pre-service teachers for Abu Dhabi’s new educational vision (Moussly, 2009).

1.2.7. Biliteracy in English and Arabic

ADEA, which monitors the management and administration of public schools, private schools and HEIs, has been established as an emirate-level authority for the emirate of Abu Dhabi. In 2010, ADEA’s introduction of EMI in primary school was a manoeuvre aiming to strengthen academic achievement in English in HE (Salem, 2012). In so doing, ADEA’s initiative to introduce EMI in primary schooling for later educational successes distinguishes the Abu Dhabi educational context from Dubai and the other emirates as well as other Arabian Gulf contexts. In 2012, the jurisdiction covered 451 schools and, of these schools, 183 were mainly English-medium private ones for fee-paying international and Emirati students and 268 formerly Arabic-medium government schools catering mainly for Emirati students (Kumar, 2013). ADEA reports that a key element of the New School Curriculum (NSC) is “developing the students’ Arabic and English literacy,” (ADEC, 2013a); however, concerns regarding an imbalance with

greater attention put on English, resulting in a “marginalisation of Arabic” (Gallagher, 2011, p. 66) are matched with praise for allowing Emirati students in government schools the same advantages as those in English-medium private schools. It is in this era that a push towards societal bilingualism presents new opportunities for Emiratis to train as EMTs in order to teach Emirati children in English in the emirate’s government primary schools. Because of the lack of males attracted to teaching (Moussly, 2009), Emirati women are set to lead a shift from Arabic to English.

1.3. The participants in the study

My focus is on Emirati females, who are framed by dynamic processes of urbanization and social development (Bristol-Rhys, 2010, p. 23). Via their training to become salaried English-medium teachers, I recognise that their experiences and expectations differ markedly from those of their mothers. Unlike their mothers who were married as very young women and did not receive formal training beyond primary school, the participants in my study are encouraged “to participate actively in the public life of the nation” (p. 84). The students I meet at the TTC are mainly Emirati women. They dominate my experience at the TTC, outnumbering Emirati men by 95%. For this reason, the meanings attached to English and professional training at the TTC appear quite different for women than men. In addition, Emirati women are positioned as agents of change towards new international standards of English proficiency, who should also strengthen Emirati culture in Abu Dhabi’s government schools. At the same time, as women, they are raised with expectations of gender segregation (separate schools from age seven). Teaching in primary schools ensures complicity with these norms. Furthermore, the kind of women attracted to the field of teaching tend to belong to off-island neighbourhoods with

tribal and familial configurations with roots from the neighbouring countries of Oman, Yemen and Saudi Arabia. In these ways, the participants in my study reflect a particular constellation of student body, marked by gender, generation, tribe and national vision.

1.4. My reflexive place in the setting

From the nexus of both resident of Abu Dhabi and TTC teacher, my inquiry into how Emirati pre-service teachers conceptualise English in light of its use as a medium of instruction in HE is personally interesting and professionally relevant. My observations suggest that Emirati women, in particular, navigate complex social agendas related to the place of English in their Arabic-speaking community. As students and future teachers, they contend with dramatic societal changes and manage changing expectations of institutional bilingualism (Findlow, 2006). Via employment at the English-medium college, I observe that professional interactions occur mainly in English, but Arabic is also widely used by students, administrators and other teachers. My professional engagement as college insider and non-Arab outsider has enhanced my sensitivity to the sociolinguistic dimensions of English use in this context but suggest caution when accounting for the use of Arabic around me. For this reason, it is necessary to integrate throughout the study a reflexive account of my own linguistic incompetence (Phipps, 2013) in Arabic balanced by my professional competencies as an English language educator and researcher in this setting.

As a non-Arabic speaking, native-English researcher with varying levels of proficiency in other languages, I am particularly struck by the tone of the language debates, where English is implicated as “the language of a colonising and bellicose West” (Gallagher, 2011, p. 63) and

otherwise perceived as a threat to Arabic and Islam (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011). Despite robust research into Gulf student perspectives of English, there is little research addressing conceptions of English and English in various higher education institutions (HEIs) where Gulf nationals meet expatriates and mainly use English with them. Research into the use of English for teaching and learning is particularly urgent for teachers, like myself, who are working in HE in Abu Dhabi, given that recent statistics report that “99.6% of the entering students (P-12 graduates) were not prepared for higher education” (Badri & Al Khaili, 2014, p. 203). This dynamic raises important questions for English-medium teaching when low English-language skills are regarded a key challenge Emirati students face (Badri & Al Khaili, 2014).

1.5. Importance of the study

Understanding more about underlying conceptions of English and its use as a medium of instruction in this setting can contribute to several gaps in the international literature regarding current internationalisation processes in HE (Altbach & Knight, 2007). While the use of English for teaching and learning has long been researched as an international phenomenon adopted in diverse, multilingual settings in Europe (Coleman, 2006; Phillipson, 2006; Wilkinson, 2013), Asia (Evans, 2000; Krishnamurti, 1990; Pakir, 2004), the Americas and Africa (Gorman, 1970; Tollefson & Tsui, 2004); developments in the Arabic-speaking world has been noticeably neglected (Clarke, 2007). Furthermore, monographs documenting the educational issues that English use generates internationally (Dearden, 2014; Doiz, Lasagabaster, & Sierra, 2011, 2013a, 2013b; Galloway & Rose, 2015; Tollefson & Tsui, 2004) have systematically neglected the particular complexities of EMI in the UAE.

Secondly, the bulk of international research into this topic is policy-related with much less known about the linguistic dimensions of English use in HEIs (Doiz et al., 2013a). Even in well-researched regions, like Europe, little is really known about English-medium teaching and how English is used among university teachers, students and administrators (Coleman, 2006). Standard definitions of medium of instruction, such as “the language used by the teacher to teach” (“Medium of instruction,” 2012, p. 1), while seemingly sufficient, do not explain the dynamics of how English is used in multilingual academic speech communities. Furthermore, as suggested by Van der Walt (2013), “medium” suggests a neutral conduit through which knowledge passes and leads to blaming the students for not receiving the message versus looking at problems beyond the sender and receiver. These discrepancies render EMI contentious to define. Dearden (2014) acknowledges that a coherent definition of EMI has not yet emerged in the literature, which can account for the discrepancies of interpretations. My study, concerned with the outlay of EMI as an international phenomenon, begins with a premise that describing ways of using English use at an HEI in the Arabian Gulf can offer important assistance to a larger problem of defining and regulating English use in English-medium contexts by favouring student perspectives over policy-makers.

In addition, this study examines oversights in the regional literature concerned with the functions of English in the Arabian Gulf. Conceptual models regarding patterns of English use in the world today focus on the role English plays in education. While reference to the role of English in Saudi Arabia have been extrapolated to the UAE (Kachru, 1992), they have not been up-dated with current data drawn from empirical studies on English use in these settings. The significance of changing patterns of English use in the UAE from a foreign language to a second

language has been speculated upon (Graddol, 1997), suggesting that research within this population could not only help to elucidate where and how students report favouring English, and otherwise, enrich understandings of current trends since it is argued that “English as a worldwide presence is not the same phenomenon everywhere” (Pakir, 2009, p. 233).

However, within the last few years, educational research has begun to target university student attitudes to English in the UAE (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011; Belhiah & Elhami, 2015; Dahan, 2007; Findlow, 2006; Hopkyns, 2014; Karmani, 2010; Kennetz, van den Hoven, & Parkman, 2011; McLaren, 2011; O’Neill, 2014; Troudi & Jendli, 2011; van den Hoven, 2014a, 2014b). Tendencies within the research literature, however, position English as against Arabic and Islam. Each language is also treated as a homeogeneous entity. That said, several papers refer to an emergent awareness of the different roles and associations each language generates in the minds of students. Findlow (2006) defines the ways in which the two languages co-exist in the UAE as *linguistic dualism* and suggests that patterns of *linguistic hybridity* could be at play. A conclusion drawn is that both languages have a place in higher learning (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011; Belhiah & Elhami, 2015). Accordingly, I see the value of investigating more closely the particular ways in which Emirati students conceptualise English and report using English in an English-medium HEI in an otherwise Arabic-speaking context (van den Hoven, 2014a).

Accordingly, this study proceeds by exploring English as a conceptual entity and accounts of linguistic practices in English-medium HEI. It has a particular focus on the perspectives of female, Emirati pre-service teachers during a period of tremendous educational reform “with balanced emphasis on both Arabic and English” (Badri & Al Khaili, 2014, p. 200). This study investigates their accounts of the linguistic features and social practices to interpret if

they conceptualise English as a resource or a problem and even a right (Ruiz, 1988). With this interest in focus, I pay attention to labels Emirati pre-service teachers use to describe the phenomena of English, while remaining open to the fascinating grey areas since participants often hold multiple and sometimes conflicting perspectives (Barbour, 2008). My concern with insightful descriptions (Hammersley, 1998) suggests that perspectives of English use in a college environment should not preclude attention to the use of other languages in social spaces surrounding this environment. Accordingly, this study examines the participants' reports of the daily face-to-face interactions in English and Arabic as a means of contextualising their accounts of conversational activity at the college. In so doing, it can approach a contextualised description of the use of EMI which can support informed debates about linguistic practices within the region. In addition, this approach can offer insights into the quality and quantity of English conversations in a multilingual context where Arabic is the region's lingua franca.

1.6. Research aims and ethnographic orientations

This study aims to provide descriptive claims about the perspectives of English which foreground its use as a medium of instruction in a research setting where I play a role. When research concerns questions about ways of thinking and social practices and involves a researcher, who is also a participant in the research setting, Barbour (2008) recommends qualitative research drawing on an ethnographic approach to data collection. As such, I feature ethnographic methods (namely focus group discussions, participant observation, and individual interviews) across several phases so that I can collect data from both reported and observed practices of using English at the college. This study also draws on thematic analysis to interpret the participants' accounts of English and English use at TTC. I discuss my understandings of

ethnography in chapter four but describe the procedures taken in chapter five. Throughout the study, I refer to my publications reflecting various phases of analysis from 2014 – present, which offered a feedback mechanism from an informed community having a shared interest in the meanings that EMI generates in HE in the region.

1.7. Definition of key terms

This study is framed around a central argument put forth in World Englishes scholarship, namely that the meaning of English as a single “coherent conceptual entity” (Sergeant, 2010, p. 97) is contested. Diverse labels for English have emerged within several discipline areas which highlight disparate features of the language. In chapter two, I explain that I use English Language Teaching (ELT) as an umbrella term to refer to the various disciplines sharing an interest in the English language and associated learning and teaching practices, such as Applied Linguistics, Bilingual Education, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and sub-disciplines which stem from them, namely World Englishes, English as an International Language (EIL) and English as a lingua franca (ELF).

Through these various lenses, there is an array of names in ELT discourses that contend with the status of English in national and international communities which informs the ways the language is treated in educational domains (Sergeant, 2010). Given their prevalence in this study, the following acronyms will be used, as follows: English as a foreign language (EFL), English as a second language (ESL), EIL, and ELF, English as a medium of instruction (EMI) pertains to the learning of academic content using English in educational environments. In contrast to the labels of EFL, ESL or EIL, the label of EMI does not carry claims about the

societal role of the English language. Rather EMI pertains to the delivery of academic content in English in a classroom domain. I discuss the significance of these labels in chapter four.

Throughout this study, I frequently use special terminology pertaining to the research setting and key features of the educational context. Henceforth, the following acronyms and abbreviations will be used: United Arab Emirates, (the UAE); the teacher training college in Abu Dhabi (TTC); and Abu Dhabi emirate's educational authority (ADEA), English-medium teachers (EMTs); Arabic as a medium of instruction (AMI) and the New School Curriculum (NSC) which includes the new curriculum and management practices for primary schools. In addition, I will use the following acronyms, abbreviations and vocabulary to describe key aspect of educational environments more generally: higher education (HE), higher education institution (HEI) and for university lecturer, instructor, or professor, I will favour the British word, teacher, since it is also the word used frequently by the participants.

1.8. Overview of the chapters

This study is organised into eight chapters. As shown, chapter one provides an overview of the study and its aims. Chapter two examines key understandings regarding research on English in language education and ELT discourses, which serves as an international backdrop for the particular undertakings in the UAE-based literature. Chapter three describes insights gleaned from a preliminary study, which helped hone the research questions. Chapter four introduces the research questions and salient features of the research settings and then lays out conceptual, theoretical and methodological frameworks, which helps to position the ethnographic approach and concern with English language variation. Chapter five explains the methodological

procedures followed. Chapters six and seven explain and discuss the findings using two frames: linguistic repertoires and linguistic awareness. Chapter eight then concludes by restating the contributions to knowledge and discussing implications in terms of conceptual and theoretical models schematising the place of English from three different perspectives. Chapter eight also offers recommendations for ethnographic approaches using focus groups and a concept of linguistic reflexivity, as well as shares pedagogical insights for institutions like the TTC. This chapter also discusses limitations and offers suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

2. RESEARCH ON ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

This chapter begins with a widened frame of research on English as a medium of instruction (EMI) conducted in multilingual academic settings internationally before narrowing in focus to look squarely at several issues raised by EMI research in higher education (HE) in the Arabian Gulf. Acknowledging that orientations to English in educational contexts vary by academic affiliation and disciplinary training (Barbour, 2008; Seargeant, 2010), I briefly outline a range of EMI research agendas. This approach is necessary for locating the appropriate disciplinary home for my research questions concerned with meanings of English and social experiences with EMI. As such, this chapter has four sections. The first section examines the research base in terms of issues with defining EMI and the growing dominance of EMI in HE. The second section presents an overview of EMI research in the Arabian Gulf region to flag interest in student perspectives in the UAE and tensions caused by a perceived imbalance between English and Arabic. The third section examines claims, positions and oversights appearing in the body of UAE-based scholarship and locates my research questions within the tensions in this body of knowledge. The final section then identifies my emergent research questions in light of the tensions in the literature and the dynamics in the research setting.

2.1. Issues in framing English as a medium of instruction

The use of EMI is currently a hot topic. Described as a phenomenon of global proportions, research is now coming to terms with “the size and shape of EMI in the world today” (Dearden, 2014, p. 4). Despite its global outreach, EMI remains somewhat loosely

conceptualised in part because of its outlay across primary, secondary and higher education sectors and its inter-disciplinary scope. While a shared understanding of EMI is the teacher's use of English to teach content courses in contexts where English is not the native language (Dearden, 2014; Graddol, 1997), there are many different ways of framing English within EMI research. Graddol (1997), for instance, addresses the international spread of English and views EMI as one of the most important educational trends contributing to the spread of English. He reports from the vantage of English-medium schooling in post-colonial contexts, like Malaysia and India. In comparison, Tollefson and Tsui (2004) guide research on educational policies in bilingual education, where the use of a range of national and indigeneous languages of schooling are also the primary focus. From this vantage, policy decisions drive the use of EMI and medium-of-instruction policies affect the social and economic conditions of students and teachers in school contexts, as seen in Hong Kong, Singapore and South Africa. In this vein, English is one choice of media of instruction in a world of ethnolinguistic diversity.

In contrast, Altbach and Knight (2007) discuss global initiatives undertaken by HEIs and characterise EMI programming in HE as a collective response to internationalisation agendas. However, they do so in ways that blur local and national responses to English. In this perspective, EMI is one strategy among other strategies taken by leadership in HEIs to promote global aspirations. Meanwhile, Van der Walt (2013) eschews the pervasiveness of EMI since it obscures the full range of linguistic options available in HE as seen in multilingual institutions most notably in South Africa and also India. More currently, Dearden (2014) examines the international rise of EMI in all stages of education, including HE, and links the EMI phenomena

to the demise of EFL. She offers that this outcome necessitates a reconceptualisation of ELT practices for content teachers new to EMI pedagogy.

In respect to my focus on the perspectives Emirati pre-service teachers hold of EMI in a particular HEI, the discourses of bilingual education, internationalisation in HE, and ELT provide various inter-disciplinary appeal for my study - albeit with some caveats. For instance, research from within internationalisation of HE discourses frames EMI as a vital and shared resource for enhancing academic reputation and university rankings. However, EMI programming and issues emerging from it are secondary to top-down policies and visions (Salmi, 2009). This particular body of scholarship, however, shows little conceptual engagement with social and linguistic issues generated by English-medium education in HE. Bilingual education has a shared concern with national policies, but examines how national agendas affect the provision of primary or secondary education (Tollefson & Tsui, 2004), and not HE. Similarly, multilingual education highlights research concerned with impact of legislative frameworks on primary and secondary schooling, but has largely neglected multilingual HE (Van der Walt, 2013). My assessment then is that research from bilingual and multilingual education poorly addresses global patterns of EMI in HE and the range of local manifestations.

In contrast, language education discourses, and specifically those from ELT, readily acknowledge the growth of EMI but do so with a view of its significance for ELT practices (Crystal, 2001; Graddol, 2006) or, as the case may be, those institutions concerned with financial gain from providing ELT training (Dearden, 2014). To date, ELT discourses, however, pay less attention to what EMI means for HE students (Galloway & Rose, 2015). Nevertheless, this body of knowledge has conceptual vocabulary relevant for understanding local linguistic ecologies

and their socio-cultural features. Some contributions include labels for the social functions that English serves in educational and other domains as well as a range of frameworks to analyse its social value internationally (Berns, 2008; Bolton, Graddol, & Meierkord, 2011; Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Canagarajah, 1999; Holliday, 2005; Jenkins, 2000, 2006, 2007; Kachru, 1992; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Nelson, 2011; Phillipson, 2008; Seargeant, 2010).

To exemplify, over the past two decades, numerous studies of EMI policies and their implementation in HE courses and programmes examine the place of English in a range of multilingual HEIs in Europe (Coleman, 2006; Doiz et al., 2013a; Earls, 2014; Hellekjaer, 2010; Jensen, Denver, Mees, & Werther, 2013; Phillipson, 2006, 2008; Wilkinson, 2013), Asia (Evans, 2000; Gill, 1993; Gill & Kirkpatrick, 2013; Hu, 2009; Krishnamurti, 1990) and Africa (Gorman, 1970; Marsh, Ontero, & Shikongo, 2002; Norton, 1989; Van der Walt, 2013). While not exhaustive, this body of literature draws on various ELT approaches, including the integration of content and language teaching (Coleman, 2006; Crandall & Tucker, 1990; Marsh, 2006). In addition, these studies point to new ways of talking about language use in English-medium settings in HE, such as translanguaging, code-switching and other multilingual practices (Mazak & Herbas-Donoso, 2014; Van der Walt, 2013).

However, ELT research into English-medium teaching in the Arabian Gulf has just begun despite the prevalence of EMI for several decades. Several papers have recently examined the prominence of English use in HEIs from the vantage that students can also use Arabic in these domains (Abdel-Jawad & Abu Radwan, 2011; Belhiah & Elhami, 2015; Karmani, 2010; King, 2014; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014; Pessoa, Miller, & Kaufer, 2014; Pessoa & Rajakumar, 2011; Troudi & Jendli, 2011; van den Hoven, 2014a). Yet research about the roles of English in this

region, if addressed at all, are poorly integrated in global discussions of ELT and EMI practices (Doiz et al., 2013b; Tollefson & Tsui, 2004) and, at best, limited to a cursory review of the region (Galloway & Rose, 2015; Kirkpatrick, 2011b). This study seeks to enrich the regional literature base and make vital connections to the growing literature base in multilingualism in HE (Van der Walt, 2013) so that the particular dynamics in the Arabic-speaking region are included.

While much of the Gulf-based research in HE research is national in focus and interdisciplinary in analysis, I rely on conceptual vocabulary from ELT discourses for its attention to the functions English plays in education internationally and its interest in implications for teachers and students. Since learning English foregrounds student encounters with EMI, a resultant focus on English proficiency and academic literacy in English sees ELT discourses increasingly relevant for examining the place of English in HE (Pennycook, 1996). English is thus both a language to learn and a language to use for learning. Although EMI pedagogy is not a central concern in ELT research, a growing consensus that EMI is making EFL orientations redundant (Dearden, 2014) and that this development warrants radical shifts in English language pedagogy in contexts where students speak one or several other languages. Accordingly, this study draws on this knowledge base for conceptual resources capable of addressing a number of concerns reported by the UAE's shift in focus from EFL to EMI.

2.1.1. Fears of Englishisation of HE

EMI is widely regarded as a “controversial and sensitive issue” (Dearden, 2014, p. 4). A consistently reported concern is the Englishisation of HE (Coleman, 2006; Earls, 2014; Kirkpatrick, 2011b). This term conveys a fear that the formal use of English among teachers and

students in HEIs will lead to the diminished use of national or heritage languages in this domain. In this move, EMI is justified in the name of globalisation or the HEI's financial survival (Van der Walt, 2013). However, Coleman (2006) addresses this issue from the perspective of EMI programmes in European HEIs and notes that "our knowledge of the real situation regarding English-medium teaching" (p. 6) is limited. His assessment of the real situation of EMI programming within Europe points to problems with implementation, including a lack of financial and material resources, inadequate preparation and training for teachers and students. These problems, he claims, stem "from the marginalisation of an HEI's linguists from the making and implementation of decisions" (p. 7). In so doing, Coleman acknowledges that linguistic insights not only can assuage fears but also clarify aims and purposes of English language programming so that student experience can be managed effectively.

Furthermore, neutral-sounding definitions of medium of instruction, including "the language used by the teacher to teach" ("Medium of instruction," 2012), which seem adequate for English at first glance, do not explain the dynamics of how English is adopted in diverse, multilingual academic speech communities (Van der Walt, 2013). With many unanswered questions around how EMI works within and beyond the classroom domain, I recognise the value of an ethnographic study for clarifying perspectives of all stakeholders, including students in English-medium institutions. Given widespread acknowledgement of gaps in knowledge about the quality of English used in English-medium programming internationally (Dearden, 2014), I see that descriptive research studying who uses English with whom, how, when and why can make vital contributions to student perspectives of English and English use in a dynamic HE setting in the Arabian Gulf.

2.1.2. Gaps in knowledge and terminological confusion

A further consideration is gaps in knowledge of EMI programming and teacher preparation. Little is known about how English is used in the “current sociolinguistic landscape” (Matsuda, 2012, p. 4). This gap in knowledge has not only been noted as a caveat for language teacher education programmes but also for theory-building for ELT. The myriad ways that English is positioned alongside other national languages in multilingual HEIs in Europe have also been acknowledged as an issue causing “terminological confusion” (Van Leeuwen, 2004, p. 1) during a current era when historically monolingual, national HEIs endeavour to internationalise and become multilingual institutions with EMI programming.

When examining EMI practices globally, Dearden (2014) also acknowledges a lack of terminological clarity. She claims that an internationally-recognised definition of the phenomenon of EMI has not yet emerged in the ELT literature despite its outlay in more than 60 countries around the world:

We are quite some way from a ‘global’ understanding of the aims and purposes of EMI because it appears to be a phenomenon which is being introduced ‘top-down’ by policy makers and education managers rather than through consultation with the key stakeholders. We are also quite some way from an understanding of the consequences or the outcomes of EMI. (p. 2)

With the emphasis on top-down mandates guiding teachers to use EMI, Dearden (2014) points out that discrepancies within regional, national and institutional contexts means EMI policies do not tell us much about real EMI practices within institutions. In addition to gaps in knowledge

about student perspectives of EMI and, particularly, how they report using English for learning content, I identify other gaps in knowledge related to varieties of English used, the forms of English developed through practice, student perspectives of language problems and their expectations about required levels of proficiency. As such, I agree with Dearden (2014), who suggests EMI research should focus on mapping out the various ways English is used for the delivery of content and assessment of learning in non-anglophonic contexts before approaching a coherent definition of the phenomenon of EMI.

2.1.3. A need for a conceptual model of EMI for multilingual HEIs

Given understandings that English-medium programming in HE internationally can refer to “very different realities” (Van Leeuwen, 2004, p. 1), research with a descriptive orientation is a suitable way forward. Clarity over what English means and how students themselves report using English with different people they meet in different educational contexts is vital for shared understanding of the phenomena. According to Van Leeuwen (2004), a conceptual model for multilingual universities using EMI is possible but would need to address four salient variables: 1) the students’ mother tongue, 2) the language of administration, 3) the language of the wider speech environment, and 4) the language of the labour market. More recently, Shohamy (2012) suggests that the differing linguistic practices of EMI in HE programmes reflect variations in “context, goals and outcomes” (p. 198). She argues that EMI practices necessitate extensive empirical research because of diverse pathways to learning English and variable approaches to balancing content and language achievement. Her main concern, however, lies with inequality which arises among students with different levels of proficiency in English. As such, she argues for the development of descriptors of effective EMI programming. Her concern is that the

language used to teach and then assess learning varies unsystematically and she raises questions around credible assessment practices in English-medium courses so that academic knowledge is not sacrificed and that assessments reliably measure attainment of academic knowledge (Shohamy, 2012).

In addition to seeking clarity over the structure of EMI programming amidst diverse English-learning pathways, I recognise the value of other orientations which can clarify English language practices in classroom domains and within academic disciplines (Ruiz, 1988; Seargeant, 2010, 2012). Macaro (2014), for instance, calls for attention to patterns of linguistic interactions in two or more languages. He acknowledges that attitudes to code switching and code choice differ widely across and within contexts. Moreover, Van der Walt (2013) argues for a multilingual heuristic model to advance beyond English-medium orientations and deal with greater linguistic diversity. In other words, an investigation into EMI should be approached from a “multilingual mindset” (Doiz et al., 2013a, p. 218).

2.1.4. A working definition of EMI

Dearden (2014) has recently offered a working definition of EMI, which balances the ambiguities with some precision. She defines EMI as “[t]he use of the English language to teach academic subjects in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English” (p. 2). Like an earlier definition offered by the British Council, the focus rests on the teacher’s use of language to teach. Nevertheless, this definition loosely allows for variance according to: 1) the quantity and quality of English use, 2) the range of academic content taught, 3) the language used to assess learning, 4) the type of educational settings, and 5)

region in the world where English is not the home language for the majority. As a working definition, it gives me leeway as a researcher to focus on describing EMI practices in an HEI familiar to me in an otherwise under-researched part of the Arabian Gulf.

In sum, EMI research is underway in many multilingual academic environments from many vantages around the world. My research draws on ELT discourses for its sensitivity to a range of orientations to English as a language embedded in various social domains. However, known gaps in knowledge and terminological confusion exist. I recognise that EMI, while internationally relevant, potentially means different things to different stakeholders in different contexts. For these reasons, my research lends me to seeking accounts of local meanings of English and EMI as well as description of linguistic practices in one particular social context. I believe this focus can enrich understandings of the diverse ways in which multilingual academic communities manage communication (Macaro, 2014). In addition, I see that greater attention to how students, such as Emirati pre-service teachers, report using English in HE can provide vital insights into the social and linguistic issues associated with English-medium education.

2.2. Themes in EMI research in the Arabian Gulf

This section looks more closely at EMI research conducted within the Arabian Gulf. Also known as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), this region includes the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Bahrain (Ramazani & Kechichian, 1988). One purpose of this section is to gain an overview of studies examining EMI in this Arabic-speaking region, which also hosts speakers of English and other languages. Edwards (2002), a sociolinguist, suggests that studies

of language which concern social behaviour in a multilingual context can be classified according to three conceptual interests: 1) the psychological dimensions of perceptions, attitudes and beliefs about the language used; 2) the linguistic features of the language used; or 3) the social group dynamics which influence the choice of which language to use in particular contexts. This section uses these three postulates to interrogate EMI research in the Gulf, and comment on themes pertaining to student perceptions of English in HE as a means of pointing out oversights and omissions.

2.2.1. Gulf student perspectives of English

Despite claims of little research on student perspectives of English internationally (Rose & Galloway, 2015), research on this topic in the Arabian Gulf HEIs is noticeably robust. Here a shared concern with a perceived decline of Arabic in educational domain informs survey and interview studies (Al-Bakri, 2013; Alenezi, 2010; Belhiah & Elhami, 2015; Dahan, 2007; Ellili-Cherif & Alkhateeb, 2015; Findlow, 2006; Karmani, 2010; Malallah, 2000; McLaren, 2011; Pessoa et al., 2014; Pessoa & Rajakumar, 2011; Randall & Samimi, 2010; Troudi & Jendli, 2011). In this body of research, UAE studies on student perspectives of English proliferate with claims generalised across the region.

Gulf-wide generalisations are given for two reasons. According to Belhiah and Elhami (2015) and Karmani (2005b), cultural commonalities include a shared heritage, the use of Arabic, Islamic practices, a reliance on expatriate labourers, and the adoption of English in many HEIs. However, Abouammoh (2009) describes GCC parallels in terms of joint investments in educational reforms. Here shared trends are seen as responses to poor performance in

mathematics and science results across the region. Similar initiatives include the expansion of pre-university programming and promoting gender equity in terms of overall percentage of females in HE. As such, shared social and cultural features as well as shared interests in investing in educational reforms allow a degree of Gulf-wide generalisations.

Despite recognition of cultural commonalities, there is little comparative work within and across the region to scrutinise similarities and differences. Most studies depend on a national frame of reference, suggesting tacit awareness of distinct educational policies and historical situations. For instance, Qatar has reverted to AMI from EMI in 2012 in the public HEIs but EMI is in full force with the cross-border HEIs in Qatar's knowledge village (Ellili-Cherif & Alkhateeb, 2015). Also, Saudi Arabia has introduced EFL at a later stage in primary schools than other countries, which has generated concern over the quality of implementation (Charise, 2007; ur Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013). Also, Oman with only 20% expatriates has a significantly higher number of Omani teachers teaching English (Al-Jadidi, 2009) than the UAE and other GCC countries. Such features point to significant variation in English-language exposure, which supports the use of national and contextualised frames.

In terms of Edwards (2002)'s first postulate, Gulf-wide research on EMI shows a shared concern with student perceptions of English. For this reason, this body of research warrants a closer look. Interest in English takes the form of investigating student attitudes and beliefs about English in respect to impact on Arabic. Several studies report that students have positive associations to learning in English for pragmatic reasons (Findlow, 2006; Karmani, 2010). There is a tendency to regard English use in terms of speaking and listening interactions with teachers although there is some investigation of the ways reading and writing are activated in preparation

for EMI coursework (Fadel & Elyas, 2015; Pessoa et al., 2014). Few studies openly address the extent that English might not be the sole language used in EMI classrooms. However, it should be pointed out that open discussion of the ways of switching between English and Arabic supports student learning in English-medium classrooms in the UAE is taboo (Carroll & van den Hoven, 2017) .

Several Omani studies look at English language education more generally. They point to an over-reliance on Arabic, showing concern for the quality of English input (Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi, 2012; Al-Jadidi, 2009). Some attention to the efficacy of learning in English also appears in UAE-based research (Belhiah & Elhami, 2015; McLaren, 2011). Amidst the journal articles and doctoral studies from across the GCC, those reporting on students in the UAE's HEIs are noticeably robust (Findlow, 2006; Troudi & Jendli, 2011) and well-cited for insights offered within the region (Belhiah, 2015). However, an overriding focus on the challenges the global status of English poses to Arabic as the regional language is evident (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011; Al Lawati, 2011; Ellili-Cherif & Alkhateeb, 2015; Morrow & Castleton, 2011; Pennington, 2014a).

In terms of Edwards (2002)'s second postulate, there is some interest in describing the linguistic experiences with written English. To this end, there are emergent efforts in describing the type of reading materials available and the quality of written English texts, which attest to some interest in understanding how English is written for local audiences rather than what people think about English. For instance, Abdel-Jawad and Abu Radwan (2011) document the kinds of written resources and communication available in English and Arabic at Oman's Sultan Qaboos University. In addition, Boyle (2011) examines the linguistic features of written English. Although Boyle's study is peripheral to EMI, it is notable for tracking the development of an

Emirati variety of English, or rather, a variety of English developing in the Emirates. He reports on the systematic use of non-standard grammatical constructions appearing in articles written in the Gulf News, an English language newspaper from Dubai. Similarly, Fussell (2011) refers to EMI, he does so to incorporate the phenomenon into a Gulf-flavoured variety of English. Together these studies shed some light on the quality of linguistic encounters in spoken and written English among educated bilinguals in the Gulf.

However, few look closely at the third concern of group dynamics and code choice. This approach concerns a bilingual's choices regarding Arabic or English speech in classroom interactions. Some exceptions are Badry (2011) and Al-Bakri (2013) with forays into how students appropriate English. In addition, Machaal (2012) conducted observations to lend support to the “mediational role of Arabic for teaching/learning tool” (p. 54) in an intensive EFL programme at a Saudi Arabian university. Although not an EMI setting, this study targets Saudi students for their views on code-switching between English and Arabic showing that its use among students was prevalent and systematic. A Kuwaiti study involving 17 Health Science students also examines perceptions of code-switching, defined in this study as “mixing of Arabic and English” (Alenezi, 2010, p. 9) and identifies that the medium of instruction is not English but “Arabic/English code switching” (p. 14). My own recent publications also contribute to an awareness of the bilingual use of English and Arabic and other code-switching or code-mixing practices in EMI classes (van den Hoven, 2014a) as well as attention to varieties of English familiar to UAE students (Kennetz et al., 2011; van den Hoven, 2014b) and stand out for addressing student perspectives of their sociolinguistic realities.

The use of EMI in HE has also generated analysis of the pressing questions regarding the ideological choice of English in Islamic countries. Several studies raise concern about the use of English during a globalised era, but do so with argumentation only and without offering empirical data (Ahmed, 2010; Al-Hazmi, 2015; Charise, 2007; Gallagher, 2011; Syed, 2003; Weber, 2011). Unsurprisingly, the same conclusions appear: more empirical research is needed. As Charise (2007) put it a decade ago, “extensive sociolinguistic investigation of these issues is necessary to better anticipate the distinctive relationship(s) between English language functions in an Islamic setting such as the Gulf region” (p. 10).

In sum, my review of past decade of studies into EMI research in the Arabian Gulf draws on Edward’s (1994) assessment of language studies to make several observations. Firstly, research concerning the first category of perceptual responses to English is prelevant. Reports of positive associations dominate, particularly among the numerous studies involving Emirati students’ perspectives of English. Secondly, interest in describing the linguistic features of written English used in the Gulf appears as does some attention to group dynamics in terms of switching between English or Arabic or Arabic - English code switching in classroom domains (Alenezi, 2010). This literature base also provides an interesting patchwork of claims about attitudes of Emirati students towards English. For this reason, the next section focuses on several attitudinal studies concerning Emirati students’ perspectives of English and Arabic and the kinds of social influences which shape their perspectives. These studies draw attention to complex social experiences and make interesting claims about linguistic dualism, intercultural alliances, student agency and linguistic hybridity.

2.2.2. *Linguistic Dualism*

Research into student attitudes to English usage in the UAE kicked off with a keystone paper describing *linguistic dualism* (Findlow, 2006). Linguistic dualism pertains to the usage of English and Arabic as two distinct zones of experience, where each language generates very different cultural associations. English is affiliated with “modernity, internationalism, business, marital status, [and] secularism [and Arabic is associated with] ‘cultural authenticity’, localism, traditions, emotions, [and] religion” (Findlow, 2006, p. 25). Findlow explains that rapid social and economic changes in the UAE have led to a linguistic bifurcation, where the relevance of each language is mediated by three kinds of influences. They are: 1) public or private spheres of use; 2) childhood versus adulthood experiences; and, 3) academic subject. The findings show students value English for its status as a world language and for its role in daily life in the UAE. Daily purposes include studying, communicating with expatriates living in the UAE, and enhancing career prospects. In comparison, students value Arabic for its status as their mother tongue. They appreciate Arabic for being an easy-to-use language which belongs to them. In this regard, conceptions of language ownership come from both a national perspective as an Arab nation and a religious perspective as members of a Muslim collective following the Qur’an.

2.2.3. *Theoretical paradigms and intercultural alliances*

Findlow (2006) also names the confrontation of two powerful theoretical paradigms guiding studies of English use in HE in the region. The two prevailing conceptions of English are: 1) a resource engendering economic betterment in light of market-driven forces (Strevens, 1992); and, 2) a threat to Arabic via a colonial legacy from the British Empire (Phillipson, 1992).

In other words, analysis favours either EIL or linguistic imperialism. She uses these two interpretive lenses to explain the place of in the UAE's HEIs, citing particular intercultural affiliations of host HEIs to make her point. She claims that North American alliances shape an EIL orientation at two federal HEIs (e.g. Higher Colleges of Technology and Zayed University) while Egyptian with pan-Arab political thoughts hold sway at UAE university as well as Dubai's Ministry of Education. She extends this analysis of intercultural associations to type of academic programme as well: Business programmes favour English and Education and Islamic Studies favour Arabic. Her paper is valuable for pointing out distinct cultural influences of each educational institution to show how local and contextual features contribute to "dual modes of consciousness" (p. 20) among Emirati students. She does this by explaining that national institutions bear intercultural alliances, which mediate the meanings and experiences associated with English and Arabic, and credits this social dynamic for the two distinct worldviews among Emirati students.

2.2.4. Language choice and ideological positioning

Findlow's (2006) study goes further to show how associations of each language manifest in daily responses. Her use of a bilingual survey instrument with some open questions and individual interviews with students and teachers allowed responses in either Arabic or English. As a bilingual researcher, she assessed the linguistic preferences of students. Via open questions, she examined the language they chose to answer in and the ideological content of their vocabulary choices. Among those responding in Arabic, she noted the use of politically-charged vocabulary pertaining to Arab-Islamic discourses of revolutionary nationalism. Her reference to the "the century-old Arab tradition for universities ... [as] hotbeds of radicalism" (p. 24) is

striking since this theme is rarely examined in the local ELT research. However, among responses favouring civic and nation-building orientations, she noticed they lacked overt political overtones, suggesting that Emirati students show little engagement with political Islam or Islamicist stances. Furthermore, only 23% revealed religion-based argumentation. As regards English, she reports generally positive associations. However, she also points out conflicting social agendas as participants positioned themselves in relation to the home domain versus the modern working world and professional aspirations. Ultimately, however, she concludes that the cognitively distinct understandings of the world are mediated by students' linguistic practices in HE where English is conceptualised as a world language and Arabic is a political and religious language.

2.2.5. English as an opportunity for hybridity

While primarily cited for linguistic dualism, Findlow also speculates that students may be moving beyond conceptions of English and Arabic as distinct zones of experience. She proposes a third variation evoked by rapid cultural change and language shift. Her argument is that the tension between the two poles of linguistic imperialism and EIL presents Emirati bilinguals opportunities for linguistic hybridity. She puts a spotlight on UAE students' capacity to redefine their linguistic and cultural ways of being in the world, arguing that "people negotiate new modes and tools of communication in accordance with changing circumstances and purposes" (p. 22). Her work then extends the two prevailing paradigms in the literature to posit a third position, whereby students use hybridity to negotiate new modes of communication. However, Findlow leaves unaddressed the linguistics dynamics of hybridity and the ways the new modes are negotiated.

2.2.6. Agency to think and act

Findlow's study is significant for acknowledging the agency of the participants in concrete ways. For instance, when asked about preferences for EMI or AMI in HE, 50% preferred EMI with 22% for AMI but 28% of the participants ignored the pre-cast options and wrote both on the survey instrument. This striking finding leaves a door open for researchers, like myself, to examine how English and Arabic function as dual languages of instruction in HE. Her attention to this linguistic behaviour reveals that bilingual students do not agree with English versus Arabic stances. In her study, the participants seized a chance to redefine their "either or" options and claim the use of both in HE. In this way, they underscored their preferences for the use of two languages.

Although her study is rather informative, there are some limitations which deserve some attention. Firstly, her study was conducted a decade ago in the year Abu Dhabi Educational authority (ADEA) was locally established. Student responses to English were very likely shaped by the federal ministry's Arabic-medium curricula when English was strictly taught as a foreign language. As mentioned in chapter one, ADEA has a vastly different vision of biliteracy (Badri & Al Khaili, 2014). Secondly, despite the theoretical sophistication of Findlow's analysis, there is little specification of the methodological procedures taken, preventing replication of her survey and interview. Furthermore, the lack of information on sampling also limits comparison of student profiles with no information on emirate of origin or prior experiences with AMI or EMI schooling. In short, her study is rich with conceptual insights but suffers from a poor account of her methodology. It also reflects a different era of English language education.

2.2.7. Orientations to language education

Clarke (2007) offers a valuable but brief report on the socio-political dimensions of English language education. He also researches Emirati pre-service teachers' orientation to language education. Using discourse analysis of focus groups and online discussion boards from 2002-4, he documents three distinct orientations towards learning to teach EFL in the federal system. He calls them three voices: 1) a naive orientation to English as a global language; 2) a nostalgic orientation towards a pan-Arab Islamic ideal; and 3) an engagement with the cultural politics of language education. Clarke argues that English has a homogenising effect which Emirati learners must contend with as Arab-Islamic bilingual teachers of English but he weakly explains how this homogenising effect takes hold.

Although Clarke (2007) reports on three voices, this study draws on an unspecified number of participants from all the seven emirates. He uses data submitted by the students for coursework submitted for their degree requirements. The study assesses how Emirati females made sense of language in light of the curricular content, which included practices of “cultural equivalencing [...] where the local culture is promoted as at the same level of significance as western culture” (p. 585). However, he does not specify how cultural equivalencing is realised. In his report, English is cast as a problem and the local culture is cast as a resource.

As in Findlow (2006), Clarke (2007) also credits the agency of the participants in his study to interpret the curriculum drawing on other discourses, and ultimately “take up influential positions in schools as teachers of English in a male-dominated, Arabic-speaking society” (p. 589). In this vein, curricular influences are important social influences which mediate, but not

determine, student perceptions of English and its places in education. However, despite advocacy of critical engagement of the cultural politics of language education, Clarke rehashes arguments of linguistic imperialism without reflexive engagement with his relationship to language, gender or power dynamics. For instance, Clarke, as an English-speaking male expatriate and senior manager in an exclusively female college, has authority to solicit participation of female Emirati students for focus group interviews, shape the curricular content, as well as access online discussion posts submitted as assignments. These dynamics are not addressed.

2.2.8. English as the new lingua franca in Dubai

In a study involving the perceptions of 330 male in-service police officers from a Dubai police academy, Randall and Samimi (2010) report that adult Emirati males value English as a world language and a language for working in public domains among residents in the UAE's largest city. Their study, originally designed as a needs analysis for government employees enrolling in a voluntary English language programme, also incorporated questions concerning attitudes to ELF in Dubai. The questionnaire instrument, delivered in Arabic, featured pre-cast statements rated on a Likert scale with some open questions. The questionnaire asked the students to rate the attitudes towards using only Arabic at work. It showed that only 18% of the respondents agreed, 61% disagreed and 21% were neutral. Indirectly the questionnaire indicates that English is a valued linguistic resource for police officers working in Dubai.

This study does not look at EMI but it identifies a positive regard for the use of English as a lingua franca (ELF) in Dubai. The researchers claim that English has usurped Arabic's former role as a lingua franca because of the great need for social interaction in English among

UAE's multilingual ex-patriates, who have capacity in 100 different languages and represent "200 nationalities and 150 ethnic groups" (Randall & Samimi, 2010, p. 43). Although this study was limited to attitudes, it delineates patterns of social interaction in various public domains in the multicultural metropolis but does so without evidence. Nevertheless, it draws attention to changing patterns of English and Arabic use in urban settings in the region, where expatriates and labourers dominate. It also underscores the high regard Emiratis have for English for daily communicative purposes, such as policing.

2.2.9. EMI versus AMI in HE

Three doctoral studies from the University of Exeter in Dubai have examined EMI in HE. When taken together, they contrast AMI and EMI from both student and teacher perspectives. Prompted by the political tensions reflected in the September 11th 2001 events, Karmani (2005a, 2005b, 2005c), an ELT professional, originally examines the issues English represents in the Muslim world given calls for education to promote "more English and less Islam" (Karmani, 2005a). He advises of post-2001 political readings where positive ascriptions given to English highlight the transformative potential of EMI but AMI is wrongfully linked to Islamic militancy.

In Karmani (2010), he moves on to examine the socialising effects on students of EMI in HE via a mixed-methods study at a conservative HEI in Sharjah. He targets the perceptions of EMI and AMI held by 365 male students who either studied in EMI or AMI programmes. The students were not only Emirati. An undisclosed number were from the neighbouring Arab countries, such as Syria, Libya, Palestine and Yemen. His study draws a complex picture where English is positively valued but seemingly contradictory views are held among the various Law,

Engineering, Business and Shari'a and Islamic Studies students. For instance, from the questionnaire data, half of the EMI students felt Arabic was a better choice. While AMI students highly regarded AMI, both AMI and EMI students felt English had an important role in an Arab HEI. Of note, when asked if the increased use of English in Arab HEIs was beneficial for modern Arab societies, about 1/5th of respondents declined to answer. In one of four focus groups, AMI students were asked directly about the negative cultural effects of English. These focus group participants disagreed with the interviewer's proposition but when prompted to elaborate, they declined to comment further. In another focus group interview, the participants rejected a link between English and Western cultural influence, but Karmani interprets this as a reflection of a lack of curiosity towards Western culture apart from a surface-level awareness of popular movies and music. He then concludes that students showed very limited engagement with Western culture as he understood this to be.

Karmani (2010) concludes that "increased exposure to English-medium education had little, if any, impact on political attitudes towards US foreign policy in the Middle East" (p. 93) and furthermore, that negative effects of EMI was "tempered to a large extent by strong religious convictions and a firm attachment to Arab cultural traditions" (p. 95). As concerns language orientations, he noted three tendencies: 1) a pragmatic stance towards English; 2) a protective regard for Arabic in light of the prevalence of English; and, 3) resentment towards the stakeholding role of language exams, where English proficiency delineated courses for studying. Like Findlow (2006) with linguistic dualism and a potential third place and Clarke (2007) with three voices, Karmani (2010) also offers insights into Emirati students' conceptions of English relevant for my inquiry.

McLaren (2011) evaluates non-Emirati faculty and management of an unnamed HEI in the UAE about their views of the efficacy of EMI. In the literature review, he links the English-only tendencies in HEIs to the aims of Emiratisation, which encourage Emiratis to consider private sector employment where English is necessary, unlike in the predominantly Arabic-using government sector. In his thesis, he casts English as a foreign language and a problem for Emiratis in EMI contexts. In addition, McLaren echoes concerns of linguistic imperialism citing stances of Anglo-American superiority at play.

His study also uses questionnaires followed by focus groups. Somewhat concerning is his classifications of teachers sampled in his study. Using descriptors found in ELT and EMI literature, he uses acronyms of Native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) and Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs) to classify teachers according to English-speaking profile. Surprisingly, in his study, he says ELT teachers are NESTS and content teachers are NNESTs even though it is common at the TTC for ELT teachers to be NNESTs and not uncommon for NESTs to be content teachers. Interestingly, he assumed that ELT teachers as NESTS would hold pro English-only orientations but his findings show they supported the use of Arabic in English classes. In contrast, content teacher, who are NNESTs, and, presumably, bilingual speakers of English and Arabic, favoured English-only more strongly, and did not favour Arabic language teaching. A glaring omission is that not until the last chapters of his thesis does he identify that content teachers included some native-speakers of Polish, Urdu, Hindi and Farsi but little is made of the multilingual realities of the HEI setting he studied.

As in Karmani (2010), McLaren (2011) found that when participants were willing to answer open questions, they provided “quite complex and often contradictory written

explanations” (p. 99). One further striking detail is that both NESTs and NNESTs in McLaren’s study provided neutral responses regarding the use of some Arabic in group work. Yet McLaren concludes that from the perspectives of teachers the blanket EMI policy in HE does not serve the best interests of the students, who had mainly studied in an AMI government school sector. The two studies suggest that the EMI policies are at issue. Even though participants provided contradictory responses, the researchers conceptualised English in a binary relationship to Arabic. They then sought to measure the extent to which the participants construed English as a threat to Arab identity or valued it as a resource. However, both researchers did not explore the rich and messy complexities of their participants’ responses and remained bound to the two frameworks of linguistic imperialism and EIL.

In contrast, King (2014), who acknowledges a prevailing focus on critical theory, draws more reflexively on his rich experience in the field. His doctoral study entails online interviews with 45 content teachers in federal HEIs who teach Emiratis. He documents broad support of the use of EMI among the teachers but with responsive pedagogies stemming from the twifold challenges of low English language proficiency among students and the absence of professional development in EMI pedagogy. As a result, content teachers created learning opportunities, such as “skills avoidance, simplifying materials, reducing content and code-switching into Arabic” (p. 3). Unlike previous studies, King provides clear explanations of his methodology, supporting replication of his study elsewhere in the Arabic-speaking Gulf. King stands out for reflexively admitting his own biases about teachers in the field and his surprise with “Arabic speaking teachers’ strong support for EMI and English speaking teachers’ questioning of it in this context” (p. 195). He concludes that EMI plays an important role in this context but argues that more

space for AMI in the federal HEIs would be an asset. In this way, his work is unique for not construing EMI and AMI as an either-or proposition.

2.2.10. Global English and Endangered Arabic

In an edited book devoting four chapters to UAE-based research, Al-Issa and Dahan (2011) establish a pan-Arabian inquiry into the current state of English and its impact on Arabic, and in particular, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). In framing English as global and Arabic as endangered, English is cast as a threat to Arabic and Arab identity. The editors argue that the increased use of English in educational domains as well as Arabic diglossia, defined as the use of dialects of Arabic at home or outside of school, are causes for worry particularly among the youth. The editors warn against “[ignoring] the signs that English, along with popular culture, are a dangerous pairing that long term can lead young people away from their native Arabic” (p. xi). The editors express desire for societal bilingualism but the book contains no studies examining how spoken English and Arabic come together in daily life.

One notable chapter is Troudi and Jendli (2011), who explore the experience of EMI and the challenges that studying through EMI evokes for 10 female Emirati students from Zayed University, a federal HEI. The authors assert that English is no longer strictly a foreign language for Emirati students because ELF “[describes] the ways many residents of different linguistic backgrounds use English in the UAE for social communication” (p. 25). They also position English as a threat to AMI since it represents “an oppressive and dominant ideology” (p. 41). So English is conceptualised as both a resource for students in the context of UAE life but also as a problem for learning in HE with possible negative ramifications on ways of thinking.

As gleaned from semi-structured interviews, their study identifies two key factors in shaping EMI experiences: 1) prior private or public schooling, and 2) family orientations to English use in the home. Other major themes include the growing acceptance of the international status of English and the competitive advantage EMI offers the participants in terms of employment and social communication. While the authors cite limited English proficiency and academic skills as challenges with EMI, they also speculate that the major resistance to academic use of MSA is due to “the quality of the teaching of Arabic in the UAE” (p.37). In this sense, they acknowledge that Emirati students may also face challenges with AMI if not proficient in MSA. Of note, EMI is suggested to be a “new mode”(p. 39) which varies in register from “simple English ... [to] advanced English” (p. 40) where problems with EMI being mainly confined to graduates of government schools where AMI was featured. Available resources in the form of tutorials, writing centers and dictionaries are credited as useful support mechanisms; but the use of Arabic or code-switching is not mentioned as a possible resource.

Somewhat surprising then are the conclusions drawn on student perspectives of English. The researchers conclude that further research using qualitative methods from an interpretive and critical paradigm can counter reliance on “neutral and pseudo-empirical discourses ... [which support EMI policies], distort reality and ... leave an indelible psychological scar” (p. 42) on learners. They also caution against “the constant onslaught of English and its disastrous effects on Arabic as a language and a cultural symbol” (Troudi & Jendli, 2011, pp. 41-42), allegedly expressed as major concerns but left undemonstrated by the findings. Irrespective of the findings, the authors position the study as a platform to contest Arabic’s “rapid fall from educational grace and an almost total devaluation at tertiary level...[which] needs to be seen within the wide socio-

cultural and political climate in the region and in the aftermath of the recent political conflicts in Iraq and Palestine” (p. 43). Thus, given a mismatch in claims and findings and poor reporting of methodology, the study’s value also comes in the form of pointing out that prior educational experience in either a private or government school as well as family attitudes towards English use in the home were salient social influences. More importantly, the paper illustrates the emotional timbre of motivations generated by the increased use of English in the Arabian Gulf.

2.2.11. Effectiveness of EMI in HE

Belhiah and Elhami (2015) provide one of the latest reports on EMI in the Arabian Gulf concerning the “effectiveness” (p. 3) of EMI. However “effectiveness” is not defined, so arguably the research concerns student perspectives of EMI. Although representing Gulf students, the data is, in fact, collected solely from 500 students and 100 teachers from six HEIs in the northern emirates of the UAE. EMI is deemed an offshoot of Communicative Language Teaching where the assumed rationale is the students’ linguistic gains but there is little assessment of other drivers of EMI. English is presented as a problem, and is described as “a threat not only to the Arabic language, but also to the religion of Islam, its values, its principles, and its centuries-old traditions and heritage in the region” (p. 6). Of note, the study goes beyond contrasting EMI to AMI and includes questions about student perceptions of using the two languages in tandem.

The questionnaire, written in English and then translated into Arabic, reports teacher and student satisfaction with student gains in English language proficiency. However, while 60% of students felt comfortable participating in classroom discussions, only 27% of teachers felt

students were comfortable. As heard in other studies, some teachers report students to be hampered by low-proficiency and unable to participate without assistance from online translations, dictionaries and more proficient peers acting as Arabic translators. This situation led the researchers to conclude that “the current EMI situation leaves much to be desired with students struggling to learn the subject matter due to their low proficiency in English” (p. 3). Yet about half of all those surveyed accepted EMI with half reporting AMI was a good alternative. Of note, when asked if a bilingual model of instruction would be suitable, 62% of students and 75% of teachers agreed.

In sum, this overview of EMI research in the Gulf highlighted a number of notable research studies conducted in the UAE. Within this body of research, certain themes are prevalent. Firstly, English is conceptualised in the literature reviews as a threat to Arabic, Arab identity and Islam but findings based on student attitudes suggest English is a resource valued for pragmatic reasons, although Clarke (2007) casts Emirati culture as a resource and English is a problem for learning. Secondly, issues of English proficiency are also unevenly addressed but low proficiency is a common concern. King (2014) shows that this is an area of teachers’ struggle but compromises made include locally responsive teaching practices. Thirdly, societal bilingualism is often stated as a desired outcome (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011), necessitating calls for more empirical research, but few studies engage with a bilingual’s capacity to use of two languages and identify when Arabic serves as a resource for learning. Yet, when permitted by the research instrument, students identified preferences for both languages (Findlow, 2006). This is a finding that King supports when arguing for greater provision of AMI coursework in federal programmes and signals awareness of the importance of academic proficiency in these two

languages. Fourthly, among those studies framed as critical investigations (Karmani, 2010; McLaren, 2011; Troudi & Jendli, 2011), English-only orientations in EMI settings are problematised on ideological grounds but do so unconvincingly. For instance, McLaren (2011) critiques Western influences on English-only teaching practices yet his findings show that NESTs preferred bilingual teaching methods. He also suggests that AMI is a viable alternative but does not address Arabic as potentially host to ideological sentiments, which Findlow (2006) does. Fifthly, Findlow points to a third way and Belhiah and Elhami (2015) provide glimpses of interview data to indicate that students are engaging in translanguaging practices and see it as way to mediate learning.

Taken together, these studies provide some evidence of the range of ways that English and Arabic are implicated in EMI research agendas in the UAE. These findings show prevailing understandings of student perspectives of English and how researchers have examined the place of English in HE in the UAE. The next section discusses what this means for my study concerned with the recent curricular overhaul in Abu Dhabi and the changing status of English from a subject of study to a medium of instruction.

2.3. Omissions and opportunities within the EMI research base

This section reviews the contributions of EMI research in the UAE from my professional lens as a teacher trainer contending with the rapid outlay of educational reform described as an “aggressive drive for HE modernisation” (Kirk, 2010, p. 41). My professional responsibilities are to assist with the introduction of “universal and mandatory” (Gallagher, 2011, p. 63)

programming in dual language education for Emirati pre-service teachers at the TTC. I seek to look beyond the focal points of the inherited body of research to tease out what it tells me about English use and English users within HEIs and the wider Abu Dhabi community. While doing so, I confront a range of labels for English in education and orientations of English in respect to Arabic. I also examine information provided about English users about who is using English with whom, where and when and to interpret the perspectives taken about the place of English. My rationale for this section is to understand what the literature offers and what it omits. This process of engaging with the literature in this way allows me to locate my emergent research questions.

2.3.1. Opportunities for sociolinguistic research in the Arabian Gulf

On the topic of bilingualism in the Arab world, Al-Khatib (2006) suggests that linguistic developments among this speech community make this topic more than ripe for research from many disciplinary angles, including sociolinguistics. In an overview of English language functions in the Gulf, Charise (2007) articulates necessary contributions that sociolinguistic research should provide:

The dynamics of English usage in the Gulf suggest that, historically speaking, the language has not presented as a viable threat to the Islamic religion in which Arabic is entrenched. However, the rapidly changing dynamics of global linguistic exchange, particularly, those offered by the internet and mass media, suggest the need to re-examine the “comfort” with which English is positioned within the language ecology of the region. ... but extensive sociolinguistic investigation of these issues is necessary to better

anticipate the distinctive relationship(s) between English language functions and [sic] the Islamic setting such as the Gulf region. (p. 10)

She underscores the importance of linguistic research which revisits and redefines “what is understood by the notion of English as a ‘link’ language in the Islamic context” (p. 10). Like Findlow (2006), Charise questions the basis of positioning English against Arabic and Islam and contends that there are a range of intercultural influences at work. Her call for more research about the range of meanings of English generated in this Islamic context sets a priority to examine how EMI fits into the various countries in this region. She also proposes seeing the research setting as a language ecology.

2.3.1.1. Opportunities to examine the changing place of English in Abu Dhabi

The use of English for education is embedded in an Abu Dhabi “[r]ags to [r]iches” story (Al-Fahim, 2006, p. 183) of considerable economic and cultural transformation unleashed by sudden oil wealth. A historical relationship between the UAE and Britain leading to the export of oil sets the scene for a humble introduction of English as an important foreign language (EFL) in a developing UAE educational system. However, Abu Dhabi’s subsequent transformation from a “backwater” (Davidson, 2009, p. 156) within just four decades to become “one of the most impressively vibrant economies in the Arab world” (p. 2) indicates the inadequacy of an EFL orientation in education. Gaining proficiency in English is framed by these tensions. The literature base offers while that learning English is necessary for intercultural communication, it is also an external threat. Its value as a medium of instruction, however, is not scrutinised.

Several interpretations from discourses peripheral to education shed light on Emirati experiences which make sense of the tensions. Fox, Mourtada-Sabbah, and al-Mutawa (2006) suggest that the tensions are a synthesis of past ways of being and future ambitions. They use “traditionalism globalized or globalization traditionalized” (p. 3) to convey that local and contextualised responses to global dynamics shape daily interactions. Similarly, Findlow (2005) assesses the rapid pace of change from poverty to wealth, calling attention to a fusion of traditional customs with global aspirations:

Trappings of global consumerism (international education, social, cultural and economic frames of reference, consumer items and jobs with multi-national companies) have arrived within the space of a generation to a formerly materially poor society, in which ‘traditional’ features of life such as patronage and councils of hereditary *sheikhs*, as well as the more recent institutionalisation of religion and conservative Islamic dress codes, are also firmly embedded. (p. 287)

Her assessment captures the social tensions by listing a myriad of past and present cultural influences involved. These interpretations help come to terms with how a group’s responses to English as a social phenomenon are multiple, inconsistent and ever-evolving. The messy integration of various influences accords with my reading of the research setting, where I engage as a non-citizen, resident, non-Arabic-speaker, and English-medium teacher.

2.3.1.2. A range of unqualified labels for English

Within the UAE-based literature, a shifting balance from Arabic to English in education is a shared concern. The language shift has given rise to a confusing array of labels marking the

place of English in education. These labels include: ESL (Karmani, 2005b; Martin, 2003), EFL (Syed, 2003), ELF (Boyle, 2011; Mouhanna, 2010) EIL (Dahan, 2007), English as a global language (Clarke, 2007, 2008) and Global English (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011; Badry, 2011; Hopkyns, 2014; Morrow & Castleton, 2011). However, each respective label of English reflects presuppositions about domain of use and users (Seargeant, 2010). Such labels are often featured but without adequate specification of their scope. Moreover, distinctions between labels are rarely discussed, negotiated or contested in the literature. As evidenced in a policy briefing for educational reforms in the emirate, the labels of ESL, EFL and EIL are all used to justify the implementation of EMI in Abu Dhabi schools (Badri & Al Khaili, 2014). The range of labels in circulation suggest either a loose foothold on the UAE's sociolinguistic realities or a free-for-all orientation to naming English where each label is construed as relevant despite varied social uses. My overriding impression is there are a prevalence of unqualified labels for English in the UAE literature base. The range of labels are confusing to me and point to an imperative to clarify the kinds of social practices associated with labels of English.

2.3.1.3. English and Arabic as homogeneous

Among the array of the labels used for English, I detect several conceptual underpinnings of language as a homegeneous entity. Both English and Arabic tend to be described as homogeneous conceptual entities. Apart from Gallagher (2011), little reference is made to the diglossic condition of Arabic where students experience vast differences when using a spoken or written variety of Arabic. Similarly, few studies account for student exposure to different varieties of English via encounters with expatriates from all over the world who work and settle in the region. Gallagher (2011) raises the important issue that primary school children must

contend with diglossic conditions of Arabic, where their vernacular differs from Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). She also points out that they manage differences in directionality and script between English and Arabic, but she does not address that they might experience different varieties of English as well. This assessment also underscores the importance of learning more about how English is used in face-to-face interactions. Also, Gallagher points out that aspirations of biliteracy mean Emirati students must simultaneously learn to read and write in the two languages. This situation raises questions of translanguaging practices occurring where students may read texts written in English but talk about them in Arabic.

2.3.1.4. English as a threat to Arabic

A further theme is a polarisation of English and Arabic (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011; Dahan, 2007; Karmani, 2005a, 2005b, 2010; Syed, 2003; Troudi & Jendli, 2011). In this dynamic, presuppositions that English acts as an agent appear where English operates as a threat (Charise, 2007), a weapon (Hopkyns, 2014), is in battle with Islam (Karmani, 2005a, 2005b), harms Islam's core values and local heritage traditions (Belhiah & Elhami, 2015), and competes with Arabic (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011). Furthermore, Troudi and Jendli (2011) claim that a cause for great consternation is "the constant onslaught of English and its potential disastrous effects on Arabic as a language and as a cultural symbol" (p. 4) when evaluating student experiences of EMI in the Emirates. Rather than a fear of Englishisation of HE, a subtractive view of English-Arabic bilingualism emerges where English opposes Arabic.

In this dynamic, learning more English will result in a weakening of Arabic and Arabic culture in ways that implicate teachers. In Mouhanna (2010), the use of EMI is identified as

destroying the cultural life of the UAE and, thus, is a general source of debate for educators in HE. According to Al-Issa and Dahan (2011), educators share a concern that “Arabic is losing its position in a variety of ways” (p. vii). These references position the English language as an agent of negative change. Since English takes something vital away from Arabic, Islam and Emirati culture, teachers should be aware of the problem. They are either complicit or powerless. For instance, in a 2014 panel discussion on the status of English and Arabic in UAE, a Jordanian education official described the situation as “the really seductive English language and the non-attractive Arabic language” (Pennington, 2014a, p. 1). Yet the ways this systematically happens is under-explained and the basis of the threat in daily practice is undocumented. Nevertheless, these allegations remain serious as a cause for concern for educators. King (2014), however, suggests that EMI teachers adapt their teaching practices and develop locally-responsive teaching practices.

2.3.1.5. English is a problem from the West

A strong influence on EMI research in this region are critical theories drawing on linguistic imperialism as a main interpretive lens (Clarke, 2007; Karmani, 2010; McLaren, 2011; Troudi & Jendli, 2011). In this conceptualisation, English belongs to a Western power base and Arabic to Islamic traditions rather than its users, including those in the UAE. As follows, English as a foreign, cultural entity is also an obstacle to learning. Descriptions of English as “the language of a colonising and bellicose West” (Gallagher, 2011, p. 63) show underlying conceptions of English as a foreign language and a language backed by colonial powers. Although the West may have exerted a lot of influence politically, the UAE was not a colony of England (Davidson, 2005). The alignment of English with a monolithic Western entity has been

sharply criticised as an outdated and 19th century inheritance (Graddol, 2006; Kachru, 1992; Matsuda, 2012). Canagarajah (1993) has long ago critiqued this view for providing little insight into student agency and their capacity to resist and oppose undesirable content or approaches. Nelson (2011) also argues that this view is no longer supportable given current patterns of English use internationally. Yet in the UAE context, the constancy of EMI in HE has generated a complaint that learning in English is “a choiceless choice” (Troudi & Jendli, 2011, p. 41) for Emirati students, where EMI is not contested because of a lack of other options.

2.3.1.6. Interest in a local variety of English

In Randall and Samimi (2010), the population imbalance of Emiratis to non-Emiratis provides ripe conditions to examine the systematic use of English in the urban centre of Dubai. They state that English is increasingly recognised as the lingua franca in Dubai. Accordingly, the relationship of multilingual English users in Dubai has generated some interest in the development of a local variety of English (Boyle, 2011). According to Boyle, written English in the media reflects “linguistic innovation in the UAE [in light of the] rare mix of bilingual and multilingual people” (pp. 144-8). His empirical work offers insight into grammatical features of an emerging local variety. However, the findings collected from Dubai’s English-language newspaper cannot readily be applied to readership outside this jurisdiction given Dubai’s unique population base. Yet some of his findings are corroborated in Fussell (2011) on his study of a Gulf variety of English. Nevertheless, recognition of systematic patterns of English language variation in the region substantiates my interest in exploring if people in Abu Dhabi also recognise a local variety of English.

2.3.1.7. The place of linguistic diversity in Abu Dhabi educational domains

There are general descriptions of linguistic diversity in Dubai and the northern emirates but little attention to linguistic diversity in Abu Dhabi in the UAE literature base. However, an English language newspaper identifies that in 2012 in the city of Abu Dhabi, 253,740 Emiratis lived among 1.16 million expatriates, including speakers of Arabic, English and other languages (Kumar, 2013). The high proportion of non-citizens is evident in the number of private schools. Of the 451 schools in Abu Dhabi emirate, 183 are private schools. It should be pointed out that private schools mainly cater for the international community - although Emiratis increasingly favour them. Of the 451 schools, 268 are fully funded government schools, catering almost exclusively to Emiratis. In total, government schools employ over 30,000 teachers and administrators (Kumar, 2013). The majority of people employed in schools are expatriates with just over 8,000 Emiratis - mainly Emirati females – also teaching in government schools (Pennington, 2014b). Figures from Abu Dhabi private schools show a minority of just 50 Emirati teachers employed there.

EMI is featured in public and private schools in Abu Dhabi, yet there are significant differences in the linguistic and cultural worlds of the two types of schools. In van den Hoven and Carroll (2017), we called for more attention to the linguistic ecologies of schooling in the UAE. The same should be accorded to HEIs. According to Van Leeuwen (2004), clarity over how people use English in different educational contexts in respect to other social domains is vital for envisioning how English is integrated in multilingual universities. To date, there has been no honest discussion of the ways English and Arabic are configured in federal HEIs and non-federal HEIs. Since Findlow (2006) makes a strong point that there are underlying

intercultural alliances, hiring patterns of expatriate teachers from different regions of the world are significant features which deserve close attention. Accordingly, distinctions between type of HEI as well as the nationality of teachers they meet there should be clarified. It should also be pointed out that Emiratis may attend federal and non-federal HEIs free of charge but will meet no or few international students. However, there are also a range of private HEIs, which incur tuition fees and enrol international students. In sum, distinctions of location and type of HEI merit closer attention for shaping experiences of linguistic diversity.

2.3.1.8. Poor description of English speaker diversity in HEIs

A further issue concerns a lack of description of how students and their teachers use English in English-medium classrooms. Although federal HEIs rarely host international students, HEIs are potentially rich sites for intercultural interactions with content teachers in English, Arabic and possibly other languages. Yet in several papers, the linguistic profiles of the teachers are glossed as EMI users (Troudi & Jendli, 2011) or English-speaking monolinguals (Belhiah & Elhami, 2015; McLaren, 2011). It is unclear how accurate either label is. A lack of population statistics, which account for expatriates, compounds this issue. Nevertheless, unofficial population statistics portray a 1 to 5 ratio of Emirati citizens to non-citizens ("Abu Dhabi population statistics revealed in new report," 2015). Such numbers suggest that Emirati students have rich, daily experiences of ethnolinguistic diversity among fellow English users.

2.3.1.9. Negative perceptions of foreign teachers

An over-reliance on imported teachers has led to criticisms of the negative impact of English-speakers in educational domains (Kirk & Napier, 2009). The charges specifically target

foreign teachers who teach “from a predominantly Eurocentric, English-language base” (Kirk, 2010, p. 26) and, furthermore, those who demonstrate “their lack of understanding of the cultural peculiarities of UAE society and their disrespect for it” (Lootah, 2011, p. 38). In this social dynamic, English-speaking educators are broadly associated with the “foreign presence at university faculty level” (p. 37) and also “the Westernization of the educational process” (p. 38). In Belhiah and Elhami (2015), native-speaking English teachers are denigrated as having “little knowledge of the deep-seated values and beliefs regarding life, religion and interpersonal relations” (p. 21) of their Emirati students. It raises questions about the cultural content of conversational activity in HE when conducted in English or in Arabic and how students and their teachers relate to each other. As such, more attention to quality of daily interaction between Emirati students and their teachers can tease out if such negative associations are warranted.

2.3.1.10. Unsystematic classifications of linguistic status of teachers

The ELT literature base provides a host of ready-made linguistic classifications of teachers. These include ESL or EFL teachers when a focus is on learning English but content teachers when the focus is the subject. Canagarajah (1999) and Holliday (2002, 2005, 2006) have also addressed the politics of labels, such as native and non-native speaker, pertaining to English language status. I noticed that description of the linguistic profile of English-medium teachers is often vague. McLaren (2011) provides an exception since he classifies teachers by English-speaking status and teaching focus. As identified in chapter two, General English teachers are identified as either NESTs or NNESTs. He also distinguishes English language teachers from English-medium content teachers. In a study of Arabian Gulf student perceptions of intelligibility of World Englishes, Kennetz et al. (2011) featured six geographical labels for

English accents of educated speakers of English working in HEIs. In this study, we referred to a Gulf variety of English, a North American variety, a UK variety, a Non Gulf Arabic-speaker variety of English, an Oceanic variety and a South Asian variety rather than rely on labels based on native-speaker distinctions. Although King (2013) uses a national frame to identify Indian teachers in the Gulf, in general, descriptions of English-medium teachers are either omitted or rely on assumptions about their monolingualism.

2.3.1.11. Absence of Muslim perspectives

In the wider Arabian Gulf literature base, there are examinations of English education acknowledging the centrality of an Islamic frame of reference (Abu Jalalah, 1993; Al-Jadidi, 2009; Al Haq & Smadi, 1996; Elyas & Picard, 2010). However, there is little written from this perspective in the UAE literature base apart from cursory references to Islamic values. Doctoral research by Omani and Saudi scholars, for instance, openly identify religious perspectives of Muslim civilisation and investigate moral arguments concerning the place of English language learning in HE. For instance, Abu Jalalah (1993), who writes about the context of teacher education in Saudi Arabia, asserts that education, namely learning EFL is, in part, a Muslim's duty to God:

The tradition of the Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him), the second source for the teachings of Islam, is rich with examples and sayings that encourage seeking knowledge and learning ... Islam enjoins the acquisition of any knowledge and language learning is considered a science and as a chief vehicle for transmitting knowledge. Foreign language learning, therefore, is considered a necessity, a useful science that

Muslims must seek. It is therefore obligatory.... This is a decree from God that there will be many languages and since it is man's nature to seek knowledge, language is his prime concern since it is the conveyer of knowledge and the channel through which civilizations are transmitted." (p. 203-5)

Similarly, Al-Jadidi (2009) engages reflexively with her Muslim interpretations when investigating the place of Omani teachers in ELT. Mahmoud (2015) argues for a closer orientation to Islamic Arab culture in arguing that "[o]ne of the main purposes of using English in the Arab world is to call for Islam and unveil its true message to English-speaking countries and people" (p. 6). Such perspectives give primacy to an Islamic interpretation of moral development and the relationship of education to values around learning foreign languages. With little written in English on this perspective of EMI and UAE teacher education, there is scope to investigate Emirati pre-service teachers' conceptions of English in light of the quest for knowledge and the value of language learning for Muslims and Islamic civilisation.

2.3.1.12. Family perspectives on women in higher education

According to Bristol-Rhys (2008), female access to HE is profoundly tempered by familial and social attitudes to gender segregation. In her studies on empowerment of Emirati women via educational development, Abdulla (2007), describes this social norm as a "code of modesty" (p. 1). Like Abdulla, Martin (2003) reports that limited interaction between unrelated males and females outside of the nuclear family is highly valued, and, thus, co-educational campuses are undesirable for daughters, sisters and wives in the eyes of conservative family members. Troudi and Jendli (2011) credit the impact of family members on ways of thinking

about English but with little explanation of how it does. Most federal HEIs offer either separate campuses for males and females or gender-segregated zones in a shared campus to respect this cultural orientation; however, non-federal public HEIs in Abu Dhabi, like the TTC, have co-educational campuses.

It strikes me that perspectives of family members on their daughters, sisters, and wives should be examined in terms of how a “code of modesty” is maintained or negotiated when using English with male students on campus. There has been little attention paid to the conduct of gendered patterns of conversational activity or choice of language in this regard. Such contextual features may have a bearing on linguistic interactions in co-educational settings and raise important questions for the English-medium environment in the Gulf. It raises questions about choice of language in respect to the gendered identity of teachers and classmates and how this might play out in the wider TTC campus, such as the library or cafeteria. As such, my inquiry should be open to this dimension of social experience.

2.3.1.13. Reflexive engagement with the researcher’s assumptions

ELT research guidelines advocate for criticality and reflexivity during many phases of the research enterprise (Chapelle & Duff, 2003). Criticality should include a discerning orientation towards the researcher’s own disciplinary traditions, underlying beliefs, power differences and conflicts and a willingness to be surprised (Chapelle & Duff, 2003; Holliday, 2009). Few studies in the literature demonstrate a critical and reflexive engagement with the researcher’s assumptions or disclose power status in the institution where they researched. For instance, both Karmani (2010) and McLaren (2011) reported student responses in interviews and surveys that

were inconsistent with their guiding presuppositions but neither reported returning to re-interview students to explore why this was so. Similarly, in Belhiah and Elhami (2015), a gap appeared between the views of teachers and students in which 60% of students in an EMI class felt capable of holding group discussions in English yet teachers rated them at a significantly lower score of 27%. The reasons for the gap in perception were not explored further. Similarly, dissonance between the findings and implications appears. Despite the students' positive orientation towards their emerging bilingualism, the researchers conclude that "the current EMI situation leaves much to be desired with students struggling to learn the subject matter due to their low-proficiency in English" (p. 3). Even though students did not report problems with attainment, the researchers make authoritative claims about the EMI environment, which did not match the findings they reported.

King (2014) stands apart due to a reflexive engagement with his assumptions about his participants' teaching style as content teachers. Similarly, Findlow (2006) shows engagement with surprising responses, as shown in her acknowledgement that students defied pre-cast survey questions about preferences for EMI or AMI when choosing to insert "both" as a third choice. She then goes on to interpret the significance of a preference for both languages. A further notable example includes Pessoa and Rajakumar (2011), who openly admit that Qatari students' perceptions of EMI surprised them:

[M] any of the participating students have proven to be ahead of us in their understanding of English as a lingua franca for the practical benefits it provides them within this era of globalisation. Students embrace their knowledge of English for academic and professional uses and maintain their link to their culture and religion through Arabic.

Although academic and professional uses of Arabic may not be as developed as the students' English abilities, students are aware of these complexities and embrace their bilingualism and cultural hybridity for what it is and for what it allows them to accomplish in a continuously developing Qatar. (p. 168)

Such self-reflexive comments point to a change in perspective as a result of the research process. Pessoa and Rajakumar (2011) stand out for admitting that Qatari students' progressive stance defied their assumptions, suggesting that Qataris position themselves as English and Arabic-speaking cultural hybrids during a phase of incredible social change in Qatar. These are important contributions for EMI research in the Gulf, pointing out the importance for the use of exploratory and qualitative research methodologies which embraces reflexivity and can contend with diverse, surprising, and contradictory perspectives.

In sum, this section identified key themes, which I regard as opportunities for EMI literature in the Arabian Gulf. I raised the following themes: the dynamic place of English in Abu Dhabi; a range of unqualified labels for English, and tendencies to describe English and Arabic as homogeneous conceptual entities in opposition. I also identified the importance of research concerning Arabic diglossia and varieties of English. My careful reading of this body of research rests against a backdrop of EMI research in other multilingual contexts. Several considerations frame my understanding of how to move forward. Firstly, I recognise that my study should acknowledge heterogeneous experiences of English and Arabic. This means recognising that both English and Arabic can be experienced as lingua francas - albeit of different proportions – and having several varieties. Secondly, my study should pay close attention to the range of communicative functions of English and other languages beyond the

educational domain. Thirdly, my research into conceptions of English should also be concerned with when, where, why and how the participants report English and take into consideration that they may also experience other languages.

2.4. Emergent research questions

As argued in this chapter, EMI research concerns linguistic behaviour in multilingual, educational contexts and can take three pathways. To date, local EMI research mainly addresses student attitudes to English use but leaves under-addressed description of the linguistic features of the language used and social group dynamics and contextual features which influence language choice (Edwards, 2002). The literature base reveals significant gaps concerning accounts of English communication in HE and, at once, suggests several opportunities for empirical research of student perspectives of English-medium settings to contribute to knowledge in the field. These opportunities include investigating the range of functions English serves in educational settings where Arabic is the official language, the range of meanings of EMI generated in HE domains, and a discussion of how English use in HE compares and differs from its use in the wider linguistic environment. Accordingly, this qualitative study begins with awareness that my immersion in research setting since 2008 and my careful reading of the literature base from the Arabian Gulf has led to the following research questions. They are: 1) What are Emirati pre-service teachers' conceptions of English; and, 2) based on their experiences, how do they think English should be used for education? A refinement of these emergent questions will be discussed in detail in chapter five.

Summary of the chapter

In light of current trends in the internationalisation of HE, the early adoption of EMI in HE, occurring in the late 1970s, as well as the commitment to employing an international cadre of academics ever since makes Abu Dhabi an interesting research setting. This chapter assessed claims made and issues raised in the international literature base before evaluating the scope of research concerning English and EMI in the Arabian Gulf. With a pointed focus on studies from the UAE, I noticed interest in the psychological dimensions of perceptions and attitudes about English use in HE.

This chapter also evaluated claims made in the UAE literature base for oversights and omissions. Some problematic themes are shifting labels for English, and conceptions of English and Arabic as homogeneous entities, where English is framed as a threat to Arabic and Islamic culture. It also identifies trends regarding critical analyses which relies mainly on linguistic imperialism at the expense of gendered or Islamic perspectives. In addition, the linguistic features of English use and social group dynamics influencing the choice of English and Arabic in HE have been left somewhat under-addressed. My evaluation of the regional literature base suggests that more can be learned about student perspectives of the meanings of English in educational domains and their accounts of how English is used here in contrast to its use in the wider speech community in Abu Dhabi. Finally, this chapter identified emergent research questions which have a concern with how the students I encounter, who are Emirati pre-service teachers, conceptualise English in light of their experiences in using it as a medium of instruction at the TTC.

CHAPTER THREE

3. A PRELIMINARY STUDY

This chapter reports on a preliminary study (PS) conducted two years before the main study at a teacher training college (TTC) in Abu Dhabi. The preliminary qualitative research study explored students' perspectives of English. However, at that time, my concern was with which variety of English Emirati pre-service teachers felt was appropriate for education. The study offered insights into five participants' conceptual understandings of English as well as insights into the conduct of focus group discussions for the main study. In this chapter, I describe sampling decisions and interview format of the PS. Then I present conceptual insights garnered around four themes: 1) linguistic dualism and social practices; 2) emergent classifications of English; 3) apprehension around hybrid forms; and, 4) fuzzy conceptions of EMI (van den Hoven, 2014b). Reflection upon these themes shaped my thinking about how to proceed in the formal study. This study, published in 2014, serves to document the development of my thinking. It should be highlighted that the process of contending with the data collection and analysis subsequently shifted the focus of my research questions and influenced my thinking about the research design.

3.1. Learning to manage the research process

This section briefly addresses the procedural insights for conducting focus groups. I focus on pragmatic considerations based on contextual features of the research setting. The PS was my first experience of managing the research process across several phases. This process included seeking ethics approval, transcribing sound files, coding transcripts, and preparing a coherent

report for public dissemination. Of note, my first experience with ethics clearance at the college went smoothly. It began with the preparation of a letter of consent and a two-page ethics document written in English for the TTC committee. The document outlined protocols for assuring anonymity of the participants and the safe protection of the data. It also included a brief summary of the research design. The TTC Ethics committee approved the study quickly and with little comment. Within a month, I conducted the preliminary study and shared emergent findings in a regional conference.

3.1.1. Making sampling Decisions

The participants in the PS were single, between the ages of 19-23, and lived in family homes in Abu Dhabi suburbs commuting daily to and from the campus. At this stage of their education, the participants were first year students and had shared a full year at the TTC using English as a medium of instruction (EMI). Before enrolling at the TTC, all students had graduated from local government schools, where they studied English as a subject to learn. One participant had commenced a Commerce degree at federal university while three members had attended a preparatory programme at the TTC for academic literacy in English. One had entered the programme directly from high school and another transferred from another university. In these ways, the participants constituted a homogeneous group of Emirati women who had encountered heterogeneous designations of English in education, including as a subject to study and as a medium of instruction. I recruited four participants personally since they had been former students. I asked them to invite another person who would be willing to share their opinions of English during a free period. The participants are identified by the following

acronyms: MR, SD, AL, NF and GA. This process of recruiting members via the researcher's social networks is a form of convenience sampling (Barbour, 2008).

3.1.2. Managing focus group discussions

Thomas (2008) refers to focus groups to describe group interviews with Gulf Arab participants. However, in the setting, I used “focus group discussions” (Hennink, 2013, p. 1) as opposed to “focus group interviews” (Thomas, 2008, p. 27) to emphasise that I would be taking a different role from my typical teacher roles. The participants, as former students, were familiar with my roles in determining the content of the lessons, managing turn-taking, and conducting language proficiency assessments. Despite plentiful experiences conducting oral proficiency interviews with students, the PS was also my first experience of hosting a scheduled speech event (Spradley, 1979). I recognised that my role as a FG host differed with my role as English teacher since I would be evaluating what they said and not how well they spoke.

An initial concern was to create a non-threatening atmosphere so I could discuss the parameters of the research study and seek informed consent. I explained the use of an audio recording and pseudonyms in all written materials. I also invited them to check my understandings at a later date. I chose a small, quiet room with a window, a coffee table and sofa chairs to heed recommendations to choose physical settings replicating conditions where heartfelt conversations normally occur (Thomas, 2008). I hoped the choice of the setting would mitigate the intrusive sight of a digital recorder since this tool is associated with speaking exams. I chose the location of the teacher's lunchroom during the late morning because of its cosy ambiance. I anticipated that the choice of location would convey that this was a special kind of conversation

and the special note I affixed to the door would show the care I had taken to book the room, and otherwise, safe-guard our meeting from unwanted interruptions, namely male colleagues walking into the room without knocking.

3.1.3. Interview format

I used a one-page interview guide with eight guiding questions, which followed a semi-structured interview format (see Appendix A: Research Protocol). As recommended by Barbour (2008), I prepared brief probes, which I discussed with an experienced male researcher and TTC colleague. The questions aimed at eliciting descriptions of the kinds of English the participants encountered in their daily lives in Abu Dhabi. I also sought conceptions of English in terms of preferences, accessibility, and appropriate uses of English in education. I also experimented with critical incidents, which I phrased as “interesting stories about using English.” With this question, I sought emotional responses to English usage in relationship to Arabic. The focus group discussion lasted 40 minutes and constituted 22 pages of transcription. I numbered each line of the transcript to assist with data analysis because it would help me locate extracts from the transcript. Using this system, I named the transcript PS for preliminary study. I prepared a first stage of codes and shared them in a regional conference. I benefitted from feedback from the experienced male researcher and the conference attendees. Extracts included in this section refer to this system of notations (e.g. Pseudonym, PS, line number).

3.2. Emergent themes

Regarding patterns of daily use of English and Arabic, the focus group data aligned with Findlow’s (2006) typologies of linguistic dualism in the UAE, but weakly supported arguments

based on ideological commitments of English opposing Arabic (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011; Troudi & Jendli, 2011). Rather than English being conceptualised as a problem, their responses pointed to conceptions of English as a viable option, and, often, a vital resource for public communication outside of the home with a range of different kinds of speakers. The participants were both humorous and critical about the place of English in their lives.

Problematic experiences focused on the implementation of changes to the curriculum which affected their experiences in high-school. As first-year TTC students, their memories of transitioning out of high school were recent. Their criticisms of English use gravitated towards the sudden implementation of a new high school curriculum with its premium of high achievement in the English-based component of a national assessment. The participants viewed the transition as a traumatic experience, which required intense individual efforts. However, the participants suggested this phase was temporary. Of note, they considered the changes to be locally driven and not the result of foreign, external pressures.

The participants also offered amusing accounts of encounters with linguistic variation from a range of sources. Their accounts provided fresh ways of classifying English. In other words, their classifications differed from those I recognised in the literature base. Their responses also showed their difficulties in delineating the function of English in higher education (HE). The PS participants showed sensitivity to linguistic variation based on context of use and type of user, which they referenced to as “accent”. In addition, they highlighted the various linguistic forms they encountered, such as different kinds of vocabulary and text-types. I expected answers describing national varieties of English but instead their answers showed salient experiences with different registers and text types. These features pointed to emergent

understandings of linguistic awareness based on diverse social experiences using English. It also showed feelings of apprehension around linguistic variation and code-mixing practices. In addition, they shared fuzzy and contested ideas about how English was used at the college. I used these as emergent codes which guided my thinking in the main study.

3.2.1. Linguistic awareness and social practices

The emergent findings provided some conceptual insights about linguistic awareness and linguistic experiences. The PS participants named Arabic and English as languages used in daily life. The participants' views of Arabic were succinct: Arabic is a language they own and a language that belongs to the Arabian Gulf. As MR clearly explained, "We use Arabic language for daily life because it is our language in Arabian Gulf." (PS, 23-24). In contrast, the participants marked English as a language for "outside home" (AL, PS, 83), and, specifically, "with foreign people who don't speak Arabic" (SD, PS, 93), including non-Arabic speaking teachers at the TTC. The participants identified colleges and universities as well as hospitals, supermarkets, and shopping malls as types of public settings germane for English use with a range of native and non-native speakers residing here. The PS participants identified English in ways that showed they viewed it as a lingua franca but not a main lingua franca.

The data aligned with Findlow's (2006) claims of dual language use, where each language occupies distinct zones of social experiences. However, the PS participants emphasised social interactions in ways that suggested a closer look at conversational activity. As explained in chapter two, Findlow (2006) associates Arabic with traditional culture and religious customs, and English with modernisation and globalisation, but the participants in this study did not state

explicitly that they accessed Arabic or English for social activities connected to these purposes. Their decisions of which language to use were based on pragmatic considerations of whether they were in a public or private domain. Furthermore, they identified their interactants as either Arabic-speakers or non-Arabic-speakers.

The findings about conversational activity differed from Troudi and Jendli (2011), who report that English is increasingly a language used in Emirati homes. The participants emphasised that a local variety of Arabic was used in the home among females and at the college among peers. English was relegated to communication in the home with female, live-in domestic workers from South East Asia, when they could not communicate in Arabic. To quote NF, “With our maid, we sometimes need to speak with her in English because she didn’t understand what we said in Arabic. So, she understand English so it is better for us to speak with her in English” (PS, 40-1). My study shows that English has only a nominal role in Emirati homes. The contrasting findings regarding English use in the home domain are attributable to differences in sampling profile. The PS participants were from families favouring the government school curriculum using Arabic as the medium of instruction. The participants sampled in Troudi and Jendli (2011) were mainly from English-medium private schools.

Although the participants described Arabic as robustly activated in the home domain, they also analysed its role when studying mathematics and science in high school. They reported negative associations with teaching experiences in high school and positive views in favour of the use of EMI in HE. The participants spoke fondly of their Arabic-medium teachers as individuals but they were critical of the use of a teaching methodology based on memorisation, where, according to MR, teachers “give us papers and (*clap*) memorise it – memorise it (PS,

438). The reliance on Arabic in English class was also a problem, as conveyed by the extract below:

GA: And some teachers - because when we - when we was in high school, most teacher Arabic teacher, not foreign -

MR: [So they deal with us in Arabic.

GA: And they explain the rules for grammar or anything in Arabic!

NF: They translate everything!

MR: They always speak with us also in Arabic - not in English (PS, 444-449)

In addition to the problematic use of Arabic translations in English class, the participants were also critical of the abrupt transition from a weak English curriculum, described elsewhere as having “no clearly defined curriculum standards” (Badri & Al Khaili, 2014, p. 205), to the new requirements issued by achievements in a standardised test called the Common Educational Proficiency Assessment (CEPA). The CEPA is an assessment of English and mathematics skills requiring a set score to gain entrance into federal universities and colleges. Its layout coincided with the 2008 arrival of the Abu Dhabi educational authority (ADEA), which ushered in radical changes in expectations for student achievement.

The participants related the abrupt introduction of the CEPA to other unpleasant preparations for English-medium environments, which showed that English was necessary for educational advancement. One participant, NF, changed her voice to recount the force and authority of the message she heard: “You have two years of Foundation, you have really to work

hard, you have - you have to force yourself to know English. If you want to continue university - and you have to be really good in English” (PS 423-4). NF then explained that these curricular changes helped to reduce the drawn-out training in a two-year long academic bridging programme, previously considered necessary for EMI in HE. NF then returned to her own voice and added matter-of-factly, “So they apply it to the school and that affects - ah - the students in school because - ah - they do not have difficult curriculum of English. And suddenly, in high school (*snap fingers*) they have difficult curriculum. They have CEPA exams.” (NF, PS 425-7). The transition entailed an intense focus on academic vocabulary, which allegedly required memorising “300 words” (SD, PS, 437) each week. Without adequate preparation, the participants reported jumping hurdles, such as private tuition, to achieve set scores on the CEPA and hence gain acceptance into state-funded higher education institutions (HEIs).

Yet despite the sudden and traumatic incursion of English in their secondary schooling, these participants saw that the government vision was ultimately beneficial. The educational reforms benefited the future generation as well as themselves, as shown in the extract below:

AL: *Yani*, for children nowadays it’s ok.

SD: Yeah.

NF: good for them

MA: When they graduate they will get good English.

SD: They will be not be difficult like us and it’s good.

AL: They change the curriculums for small grades. Their – they -

NF: [they do really good for us. (PS, 500-506)

The extract above uses “they” to refer to Emirati children today and then shifts to the locally based curriculum planners. The extract shows the participants blamed the local educational authority for problems with the implementation of the changes, but not English. Instead they regarded the increased use of English as a beneficial change for Emiratis in general and themselves in particular. These findings show their problems with English education were due to the sudden pace of reform and not with the language itself.

3.2.2. Emergent classifications of English

The next section looks more closely at the social process the participants used to construct their answers. The participants showed consensus around positive associations to English based on its utility as a public language. English was relegated to social contexts outside the home for male and female non-Arabic speakers. While English was mainly used in public domains in the UAE, the PS participants regarded Arabic as the main language for cultural insiders. As AL put it, “We meet different people for different language but we speak English with them” to which MA qualified, “But the basic language is Arabic. Just with teacher speak English. But together? Arabic!” (PS, 29-30).

From these statements, I sought insights into the ranking of English in relation to Arabic and how understandings of Arabic influenced understandings of English. For instance, as Arabic speakers, GA explained that she understood the concept of linguistic variation and applied it to English with the following statement: “Also in Arabic we have same language but different accent.” (PS, 141) The following extract shows clearly how the participants used a group process

to help clarify their thinking. This process began with sense-making process brought on by my questions about “kinds of English”:

MA: Different kinds (*whispers to self*) different kinds

NF: because the English we hear it in the films are different from -

AL: [what we

NF: [what we - what we study

SD: [yeah.

NF: Ah - there is some novels which I read - it has - uh

SF: [Also the vocabulary! Yeah!

NF: Vocabulary and some words are different from what we study and I think because it is a product from other country, like Fran-ch and - so it is strange - it's not

SF: [mmm -

NF: I don't feel it's real English.

SD: yeah, you know, for example, if I want to practice my listening or vocab. I think when we watch English movie, the vocab that they use is COM-LETE-ly different from academic vocab. (PS, 104-116)

This constructive thinking process led the PS participants to classify English into types. They first established that written texts differed from spoken modalities. Although they did not supply these words, their response showed awareness of register, etymology of different lexical items and loan words. These salient linguistic features helped them to classify English into types. This extract also conveyed that the adoption of words into English from other languages like French was a phenomenon that NF downgraded the English she heard as not real. Through a group

effort, AL concluded confidently on behalf of the group, “So we divide English into academic and non-academic” (PS, 119). Her peers laughed in support. AL then followed with a restatement to settle the matter. The collaborative effort struck me as central to knowledge-building.

However, a second development appeared as the participants contended with messy social encounters using English. As mentioned in chapter two, a prevalent classification for English in the ELT literature is speaker identity, which uses labels pertaining to proficiency and authority, such as native and non-native speaker. Speaker identity can also be accorded by geographical territory, such as British English, to mark English users by location of their speech communities (Seargeant, 2012). Kachru’s (1992) three-circle model features speaker identities categorised by region, function and form. The model relies on national patterns of using English, which are bound to historical contacts with colonisers and a subsequent impact on English language induction. While oft-criticised for over-emphasising the nation state and colonial history (Bruthiaux, 2003; Galloway & Rose, 2015), his model remains relevant to my study since the PS participants drew on understandings of national varieties, which they explained via concrete experiences with various social groups prevalent in the UAE.

Again, through a group effort, the participants co-produced four varieties of English and, in so doing, glossed all expatriates into a composite group. I list these four varieties according to the order they appeared in the transcript: British, Egyptian, Indian, and American English. The participants readily described each variety in ways that offered conceptions of linguistic profiles for each kind of English speaker they encountered. For instance, several participants identified

the sounds and rhythm of each English variety as indicative of “accentedness”. The sources of these four varieties were social encounters in school, the college, and the media.

The participants offered bold comments about their subjective understandings of how English speakers differed. American English and British English were subject to extended commentary and debate. American English was characterised by one participant as “so fast” (AL, PS, 148) whereas British English was “slow and without r” (AL, PS, 148). Places where they heard American English were “movies, college, universities” (MR, PS, 205). Sources of influence of British English were similar but with more specificity of cultural icons, namely Harry Potter and BBC News. For Egyptian English, two participants cited teachers at high school. In a subsequent extract, MR characterised Egyptian English for using a “z” sound instead of “th”, such that “the weather ... [becomes]... ‘ze wizer’” (MR, PS, 353). Sources of Indian English included Indian workers in their immediate social context, namely housemaids, and Bollywood films. AL described Indian English positively as sounding “like music” (PS, 151), but SD criticised it for being too difficult to understand because “they make a new language.” (PS, 176). Such interaction showed a keen awareness of English language variation and attitudes developing around a standard norm of English. In addition, it showed the liveliness possible from focus group discussions.

3.2.3. Apprehension around linguistic variation and hybridity

The participants identified varieties of English in ways that suggested discomfort with processes of language change. For instance, Indian English was identified as a distinct variety but their talk revealed unsettled feelings about phonological variation and code-mixing. In the

following extract, four participants explained that pronunciation and word borrowing were sources of difficulties for comprehending Indian English speakers:

NF: Their accent it's - it is hard.

SD: Yeah difficult.

AL: [They make English much harder (*laughter*) when they speak.

MA: They change, miss, the word - they mix - the word!

SD: They mix their Indian - and - with the English (*laughter*) (PS, 159-163)

This extract pointed to encounters with code-switching. In this case, the participants made fun of word borrowing and code-mixing, suggesting that this way of speaking English deviated from their understandings of a standard norm.

I then decided to ask if this orientation also applied to when Emiratis spoke English. I noted a similar response when the participants discussed the possibility of an Emirati variety. Four members indicated they were not ready for the label *Emirati English*, but one jokingly claimed that her way of speaking exemplified Emirati English, as shown below:

SD: Like Indian English, *yani*? (*laughter*)

AL: Okay when I speak it's an Emirati way! (*laughter*) (PS, 517-519)

Interestingly, despite laughing at the concept of a local variety, SD herself demonstrated code-switching, an often-studied feature of new Englishes (Brutt-Griffler, 2002). The extract above shows a systematic insertion of an Arabic expression, *yani*, ('I mean') into an English sentence.

This feature re-appears in the extract below, where the participants described congregating in settings where English is used among a range of linguistically diverse people:

GA: Miss, when we – eh - when we sit in the group and some person fr - Indian and some for Syria and other for British we know who are speak. We know this is for India, this is from -

NF: from their accent yeah

SD: when t - or somebody they know we are Ar-Arab people because - I don't know, maybe our accent or something. They know we are not English one hundred percent or foreign people.

AL: not *yani*?

NF: It's too early to get our own way (*laughter*) of speaking English (PS, 520-526)

This extract captures two further conceptual insights for the main study. First, it indicates that the participants position themselves as members in a multilingual group who use English when together in ways that challenges established themes in the literature. As observed from SD's response, she affiliated somewhat with English-speakers in a way that does not carry associations of English as an entity belonging to a bellicose West (Gallagher, 2011). In addition, GA reported being in groups comprising both native and non-native speakers. This kind of English-using group does not mesh with a proposition of ELF as “far removed from its native speakers’ linguacultural norms and identities” (Seidlhofer, 2001, p. 134), suggesting that the participants experience and integrate a range of linguistic influences in Abu Dhabi. Secondly, the participants recognise a potential for a local way of speaking English and, as stated by Boyle (2011) that it may be, as of yet, premature to refer to an Emirati variety. Yet, as illustrated above, the

participants systematically used some Arabic loan words in their “way of speaking English”. These extracts sensitised me to the participants’ concrete experiences with various forms of linguistic hybridity as well as their apprehension around how to make sense of these experiences with code switching and word borrowing.

3.2.4. Fuzzy conceptions of EMI

A further insight addresses fuzzy conceptions of EMI. In respect to daily interactions with their teachers at the college, the participants debated the use of British or American English. The following dialogue shows the dynamic co-construction of meanings of EMI and an attempt to establish the linguistic identities of the multicultural faculty. It also shows that the individual participants temporarily held positions as they clarified their opinions. When first queried about the kind of English that is appropriate for education, NF confidently replied, “British. But our teachers are American and Canadian so ...” (PS, 213). However, other participants interjected her mid-flow to contest this answer. NF’s ensuing justification was that the “teachers are American but curriculum is British [... and...] so some word - uh - the spelling word, she said, ‘this is American and this is British’. So you choose - ... which (?word) you prefer’ (PS, 220-226). I noted that NF credited her own agency when deciding how to speak English but she had reduced her choices to either British or American varieties. She also used this classification for her teachers.

Input from other members in the group ensured further complexity. For instance, GA asserted that differences in accent, vocabulary, or grammar demonstrated by her teachers were unimportant. She said, “The purpose of them is to teach us English—not American English or

British English—just English” (PS, 232) NF appealed, arguing that, “But you have to know the different because you deal with different people” (PS, 233). GA partially agreed: “Okay, yeah, yeah, we know we know - but about me, I don’t care if they teach me, British or American” (PS, 235-237). Then SD interjected with a conciliatory tone, “you try hard to understand both of them,” (PS, 238). Subsequently, AL added another response: “Just – *yani* - we care about – uh - understand - uh both of them. Just, *yani*, if we have an - British teacher, we, *yani*, the most priority for us is to understand her [...] Yeah our teachers - uh - doesn’t - did - do not mind, *yani*, if I speak American or British or if I mix them all up.” (PS, 242-244).

The discussion about the way their teachers spoke English at the college provided an opportunity to analyse the verbal negotiations entailed when making sense of the complex underpinnings of my ‘simple’ question. I detected six stances that the participants tentatively held as they analysed their experiences in an English-medium environment:

1. British English is used even though some teachers use other varieties of English;
2. American English is used for speech but a British curriculum is used for learning;
3. The differences between the different spoken varieties are irrelevant provided that a standard form of English is used;
4. While the teachers may illustrate the phonological and lexical differences of British or American English, they allow TTC students to choose which variety to use in speech;
5. The differences are unimportant provided that input is comprehensible; and
6. The teachers support a mixture of British and American English.

The tone of subsequent negotiations signalled a need to change my approach in questioning. A strategy I took to advance the discussions was to reword the query. Rather than a question about a collective stance for the UAE, I then asked about personal preferences. The subtle changes in wording generated a new range of responses, delivered with a spirit of jest. For instance, when asked about personal preferences, NF offered a definite response: “I prefer mostly American. I - It is better for me to listen and speak as an American. I think it is easier, more easier than British” (PS, 267). AL took a contrary response: “I prefer to listen to British – uh - to speak or be with other - uh no not just speak with an American” (PS, 267). MR took a conciliatory stance in stating her preference as: “50% American - 50 % British” (PS, 262) while GA offered yet a further variation: “50-50 – yeah – I - I like to listen British but when I want to speak – uh - I want to speak in - American” (PS, 264-265).

Only when the deliberations concerned the best kind of English for UAE schools generally, did the discussions take a more serious tone. Here I detected an emerging authorial stance reflecting awareness of government policy for Emiratis as a collective entity. The development of thought began with silence. One participant then quietly hedged with “British?” (AL, PS, 290) even though she had previously claimed her preference was American English. NF then countered AL in naming a hybrid variety of American and British English, as evidenced below:

I think mixing. If you mean the – uh - American English or British I think mixing. The two kinds is better for us here in the UAE because - ah - here we have different nationalities and every national - uh - yeah - either they study American English or British Eng - English so it is better for us to know how - the both: English – er - American and British (PS, 295).

Her rationale in favour of mixing varieties of English was premised on the multicultural residents in the UAE and the two popular types of curricula in UAE private schools. AL's rationale established consensus among the other four participants. Further probing revealed the matter was settled. For instance, when I asked the participants, "Should other kinds be introduced?" an emphatic "No. Just stick with this" was the reply (MR, FG, 300).

3.3. Conceptual insights for the main study

The participants' responses prompted a shift in my thinking about the lines of questioning I should integrate into the main study. First of all, I moved away from asking direct questions about varieties of English to more open questions about language use in general. I noticed that the participants generated other classifications based on linguistic forms of the Englishes that they encountered rather than national variety. However, regional accent was important in classifying English users into four composite groups. The participants also addressed Arabic as a language, which they experienced in different ways and suggested that English was the same. For instance, they cited lexical and phonological variation and then applied these understandings of English. Accordingly, I realised that open questions about language use in general, and not just about English use, would help me learn more about how the participants positioned English in the Abu Dhabi context.

Secondly, the PS participants primarily construed Arabic as the main home language and socially necessary as the region's lingua franca in schools and other domains, and English as socially necessary in the Emirates for serving out-group communication. They suggested English

belonged but was not the only choice of lingua franca. Accordingly, I wanted to explore how the participants compared and ranked English in respect to Arabic. For instance, Graddol's (1997) proposes that English acts as a lingua franca internationally, and not a default lingua franca. However, this stance did not mesh with the PS participants' explanations. They reported choosing English when the communicative partner could not use Arabic. In so doing, they underscored that Arabic was the region's main lingua franca. These findings guided my thinking when planning the main study.

Thirdly, I wanted to explore the value given to English and the particular features held up for scrutiny. It seemed English was bound to situations requiring a functional exchange of information rather than the maintenance of intimate social relationships. The participants offered makeshift labels drawing on domains of use suggested variations in terms of register, accent and interactants, which I did not recognise from my readings in the literature. As such, I wanted to explore further the basis of their classifications if indeed social interaction with speakers in various settings explained how they conceptualised EMI. These insights affected my choice of questions and provided feedback on how to redevelop the questions for the focus group discussions.

A fourth insight concerned subtle changes evoked by the phrasing of questions. I noticed that the topic of English use in education, including "what happens" and "what should happen", exposed underlying tensions and a range of contested and conflicting ideas around EMI. Silence or hesitation instead of outright disagreement with peers were noticeable. I also noticed pauses and awkward responses when commenting about government decision-making. Fuzzy and unsettled responses also appeared when I asked them to prescribe or describe norms for

education. I attributed these moments to the difficulties of describing the messy, social realities of using English with a range of English users, as well as prescribing how communication should happen when among educated users at the college. This texture shaped my thinking around a second research question, which should be about social influences. These insights helped me to realise the importance of asking open questions designed to access a range of possible meanings that English use generates rather than starting with established concepts from the literature. As a result, I recognised the value of an exploratory research design.

3.4. Methodological insights for the main study

In addition to insights about the content of my questioning, the PS also yielded a number of rich insights about the conduct of focus group discussions. I noted first-hand how responsive my participants were. The group discussion format supported emphatic and frank responses of individual perspectives and orientation to consensus after negotiating diverse considerations. The focus group format underscored a need for a theoretical framework, which was capable of explaining social processes when developing an answer and accommodating a range of multiple and contradictory perspectives (Barbour, 2008). I recognised that the group environment contributed to their rich, heartfelt responses, which allowed me to listen actively.

Because the participants seemed to depend on each other's input, I realised that the participants themselves had not examined their social experiences of linguistic variation but they appreciated the opportunity to discuss its significance in daily life and for linguistic practices in HE. I also noticed that a collaborative process resulted in a lot of talking over each other. In the transcript, this appears as half-finished sentences and interruptions. For this reason, I recognised

the value of including individual interviews for providing time and space to help individual participants articulate and develop responses without interruption.

A further insight was borne from the process of learning to transcribe focus group talk. The varied personalities of the five members achieved a rich and lively discussion but posed problems for transcription. I preferred verbatim transcripts for offering evidence of how language is used (King & Horrocks, 2010). In some parts of the discussion, the participants turned to each other and used Arabic. While this was important to see, the process of transcribing in English as well as a language I did not know well was time-consuming. I was challenged on how best to address the technical issues of transcribing Arabic and English when they are used seamlessly in a response. English, which is written from left to right, does not support adding words in Arabic since it is written from right to left. As there was little on hand in the reference literature on the use of focus groups in the Gulf, I made a pragmatic decision to transcribe the words phonetically in English. Even though I teach about the International Phonemic Alphabet, I rejected the use of these symbols because they are cumbersome to use on a keyboard. A further burden was identifying speakers. The amount of over-taking made the transcription process slow but I wanted to be faithful to the way the participants constructed the answer. With several participants talking over each other, it was time-consuming to replay short segments to identify speakers by voice or speech style.

In an effort to expedite the transcription process in the formal study, I decided to plan for a smaller focus group of three to four rather than the recommended four or five (Winslow, Honein, & El Zubeir, 2002). I also surmised that a smaller group would have little impact on group dynamism if students picked their own group members. Having realised first-hand the

intense commitment of time and effort of verbatim transcription (King & Horrocks, 2010), I also decided to seek assistance with future transcription. Although adept at ungrammatical English, the messiness of overlapping talk and unfamiliar Arabic utterances left me with questions about accurate notations since shortcuts taken at this stage could be a serious threat to data quality (King & Horrocks, 2010). My response was to invest the time in listening carefully. This commitment ensured that I accurately identified each speaker and faithfully represented their utterances. I also consulted on-hand texts for guidance on markings to notate overlapping talk, pauses, and restatements (King & Horrocks, 2010; Samra-Fredericks, 1997). Careful annotation at this stage assisted in the development of a list of key features for notation, which I used in the main study. The development of transcription codes will be discussed in chapter five.

Summary of the chapter

In sum, the PS offered numerous conceptual and methodological insights. It shifted my focus away from conceptions of English as national varieties representing and towards the participants' experiences of using English and their conceptions of English variation. In addition, the PS study pointed me towards learning more about the social influences they experienced. This process helped me understand priorities for questioning. I also realised first-hand the value of focus groups for participants in the Gulf since the quality of the discussion seemed lively and robust. However, I also faced constraints regarding transcription. These limitations suggested a smaller group size in the main study would achieve the same benefits. I also developed a transcription code that assisted with noting over-talking and clarified how to deal with code-switching in Arabic.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. RESEARCH APPROACHES

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the research question, the research setting, and my thinking tools. By thinking tools, I mean conceptual models of English language variation, a theoretical framework for social reality, and a methodological framework capable of addressing a dynamic social setting where I play a role as an English language educator. I begin in section 4.1 by discussing the research questions. Then I describe the teacher training college (TTC) in Abu Dhabi as a bounded research setting in section 4.2. After that, I describe ways of labelling and classifying English by disciplinary interests and identify two conceptual models that anticipate linguistic variation in ways that are relevant for researching perspectives of English as a medium of instruction (EMI). In section 4.3, I explain the salience of social constructionism as a theoretical framework and highlight important insights for me pertaining to the use of EMI in terms of knowledge gain, learning processes in educational institutions, and language use. Throughout this section, I relate the use of English at the TTC to processes of gaining professional knowledge for English-medium teachers (EMTs) about teaching in English. In section 4.4, I relate my understandings of ethnographic methods to personal motivations and professional experiences, first signalled in chapter one. I then consider the aims of this study as an exploratory, qualitative research project in terms of insightful descriptions. This chapter serves to make links between the established literature bases and conceptual and theoretical tools I need for first-hand engagement with the research setting (Atkinson, 2001) in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates.

4.1. The research questions

The study has been designed to answer the two main research questions. As discussed in chapters one and two, the questions originated from professional practice and were honed through careful readings of the literature, and, as described in chapter three, the preliminary study (PS). Research question 1 is framed by my awareness that a range of labels for English are unsystematically used in the local literature and that a coherent definition of EMI has not yet emerged in the international literature (Dearden, 2014). Accordingly, English and EMI potentially means different things to different stakeholders around the world. As such, the first question is as follows:

- 1) What are Emirati pre-service teachers' conceptions of English in light of its use as a medium of instruction?

This question has two parts. Firstly, it seeks a description of the range of names and labels given to English by Emirati pre-service teachers and the basis of these understandings of English. This includes how they conceptualise the relationship of English to Arabic as well as how they describe each language. Secondly, it seeks to clarify how their understandings of English relate to the purposes of learning in higher education (HE). In this sense, it also seeks how they describe using English in terms of the particular social functions English serves in an academic domain.

The first research question acknowledges that an array of names, labels and metaphors for the phenomena of English exists (Seargeant, 2010), which reflect shared understandings. It asks what understandings Emirati pre-service teachers have of this aspect of social reality. This

question seeks clarification of salient features of English that the participants foreground in meaning-making processes. The ways the participants describe English can then be examined in relation to the literature on EMI in the UAE and in multilingual contexts internationally. In addition, describing the perspectives of EMI by Emirati pre-service teachers in this context at this time has potential to locate current understandings of English amidst ongoing educational transformations in the Abu Dhabi emirate and stimulate fresh dialogue about the incursion of English in educational domains at this point in time among concerned stakeholders. In this sense, the first question focuses on “what” Emirati pre-service teachers think English is and what English means to them.

The second question, however, looks at their accounts of social experiences associated with “how” these ideas circulate and take hold. Research question 2 explores the participants’ views of the social processes involved and seeks their descriptions of the quality of social interactions involving English. The second question is:

2) What are the social influences mediating conceptions of English?

With this question, I seek to learn more about how the participants relate to the people they use English with. Such social influences could include people the participants report meeting face-to-face on a daily basis or indirect influences and encounters, ranging from opinions of family members to ideas from prominent figures accessed through the media. It also entails asking about the participants’ subjective experiences of social encounters in various social domains inside the college domain as well as those outside.

By asking about social experiences using English in daily life and their perspectives of the place of English in their society, this question illuminates context in the meaning-making process (Barbour, 2008). As pointed out by Najjar (2016), context is more than “a backdrop of the research activities” (p. 148). I share an understanding that “out-of-class learning environments and after-class activities of language learners” (Najar, 2016, p. 148) provide wealth of social experiences, which shape meanings of English. In this sense, my investigation of conceptions of English must necessarily be open to influences external to educational domains.

Perspectives of social influences rely on participants’ accounts of daily social interactions and the meanings attached to them. My inquiry into daily communicative practices in English engages with social experiences in the wider social environment where Arabic is featured as the dominant language although many varieties of spoken Arabic are in circulation. I then require a theoretical framework which can explain how concrete experiences of face-to-face interactions shape understandings of social reality. To this end, I recognise the relevance of Berger and Luckmann (1971), who refer to the “typification of one’s own and other performances” (p. 89) as a means of evaluating face-to-face interactions according to frequency, intensity and degree of commitment to the social interaction. Application of this way of thinking about conversation activity will be discussed in greater detail in section 4.3. In addition, ecological models from the substantive literature base foreground particular contextual influences and explain how English language variation happens, which will be explained in section 4.2.

These two questions also signal appropriate methodological approaches. One way to gain access to perspectives is to elicit descriptions of the kinds of interactions the participants have with other English-users and influential people in their social milieu who offer their perspectives

of English. This entails asking ethnographic questions about family members, role models and the media, and other interactants encountered directly or indirectly in their daily lives. Another way is to observe some social encounters, such as conversational activity in English at the college. Observation can help to see what are the “tacit cultural rules” (Spradley, 1980, p. 56). One caveat is that many interactions are hidden from my view or, equally, that I do not fully comprehend all the languages I may hear. According to Spradley, the participant observer gains “experience [of] being both insider and outsider simultaneously” (p. 57). Fieldwork opportunities, including watching the participants in the setting as well as noticing how I engage as an interactant, can help me better understand what Edwards (2002) refers to as social group dynamics affecting choice of language to use, as described in chapter two. In section 4.4. I discuss parameters for my methodological approach. However, I reserve description of the procedures followed and tools used for chapter five.

As signalled in chapter one, these research questions emerged from professional engagement in the setting as a teacher and a novice researcher. They also respond to a careful reading of claims and oversights in the UAE based literature as shared in chapter two. My purpose is to seek to explore a range of understandings of English and accounts of salient social experiences, and in this way, delve into how the participants think about English and why they think the way they do (Morgan, 1997). In sum, my research questions are directed at learning more about what English is and how it is used in a medium of learning and teaching in this unique Arabian Gulf context. The next section introduces several salient features marking the TTC as a bound setting with an international outreach.

4.2. The research setting

As introduced in chapter one, a higher education institution (HEI) on the island of Abu Dhabi city serves as a bound setting and a rich microcosm of intercultural interaction. The TTC hosts a range of Emiratis and expatriates who use English for purposes of study or work. While the TTC is also the place of my employment, it is a workplace shared with Emirati nationals (often identified as “locals”) and other expatriates from a range of countries to support the college’s function. Like many other HEIs in the UAE, the TTC hosts teachers from a wide range of different countries. At the time of the study, the composite group of English-speaking teachers held citizenships in one of approximately 25 countries from around the world. These include Arabic-dominant nations (e.g. Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia, Somalia, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine); English-dominant ones (e.g. New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom) as well as linguistically diverse countries (e.g. Malaysia, Singapore, Myanmar, and Brazil). When taken together, TTC teachers, a social group I fit into, represent a multilingual and multicultural group with proficiency in English and varying proficiency in Arabic and other languages.

The campus also hosts an equally diverse range of educated administrators and managers, and less educated support staff mainly from South-east Asia, subcontracted to the TTC as cleaners, cafeteria staff and security guards. The TTC community is thus plurilingual where members have at least basic proficiency in English or Arabic, and often proficiency in other languages. On the basis of this ethnolinguistic diversity, the TTC reflects the international dynamics of the wider city. At the TTC, students encounter an array of English users. Accordingly, the TTC is a rich microcosm with international dimensions but, as a professional

community, its mission is to use English for local purposes as the language of instruction for future EMTs. Thus, the purpose for using English is to serve local needs as set by the Abu Dhabi educational authority (ADEA). Accordingly, the TTC is an English language teaching community with local and global dimensions. This community hosts social interaction in English, where, as a matter of course, Emirati students interact during college hours with educated speakers of English from around the world for teacher training purposes.

In this sense, the TTC is open to the world of English users yet it is also a closed campus. Various restrictions bar interaction with people not affiliated with the mission of the TTC. For instance, security guards monitor all external doors. Further barriers include key codes, swipe cards and fingerprinting for employees of the TTC. This system regulates my access to the research setting Sunday to Thursday between business hours and I require special permission to enter outside these timings. Strictly because of my employment as a teacher, I have gained access to the TTC as a research setting. These restrictions limit interaction in English to members of the college community and bar encounters with strangers. For this reason, I acknowledge that my access as a researcher and teacher offers me roles as a participant and an observer, which should be approached with a spirit of opportunism (Holliday, 2009).

At the time of the study, the TTC was a one-building campus located in an Abu Dhabi area, also called “off-island.” Bordered by a highway and an industrial zone, the geographical locations renders the TTC a bound setting. Unlike many HEIs internationally, women are not free to exit. Despite rapidly changing expectations for women, regulations shape behaviours in public spaces according to “a strict Muslim code of behavior for women” (Gardiner-Hyland, 2014, p. 88), which Abdulla (2007), an Emirati, refers to as a public “code of modesty” (p. 1). As

observed in Winslow et al. (2002), Emirati women wear bejewelled black *abayas* and *shaylas* over vibrant customary silk gowns, although I notice that black abayas over jeans and high heels are currently more common. Yet because of male presence on campus, many Emirati women veil their faces in public areas of the college and in classrooms where males are their teachers.

Although the TTC is a public space for Emirati men and women, it may also be a place representing confinement for Emirati females. Unlike Emirati males, females must provide evidence of guardian approval to exit the campus outside of set timings. I notice that female students often create opportunities for women-only zones via closed doors and blacked-out windows. From a female perspective, it seems the TTC also offers a vital communal space for female friendships. Awareness of the gendered dimensions of college life frames my inquiry. I see that my gender supports participant observation since, as a woman, interaction with Emirati women using English for instructional and other social purposes is largely unencumbered.

These features of this research setting in the Arabian Gulf highlight the rich potential for an ethnographic approach in a research setting, broadly described as “traditionalism globalized or globalization traditionalized” (Fox et al., 2006, p. 3). My position as a female teacher at the TTC supports daily interaction with female Emiratis. The TTC is a bound setting via its guarded access and geographical location, yet it is also linguistically complex community where Arabic-speaking students learn English and learn to teach in English. The next section identifies my thinking tools, and how they enrich my investigation into perspectives of English in light of its use at the TTC and the kinds of social influences which mediate conceptions of English.

4.3. Conceptual tools for English language variation

This section presents conceptions of English as a heterogeneous entity, which are under-addressed in the literature bases described in chapter two, but are helpful for promoting a richer understanding of the linguistic complexities posed in EMI settings. I first draw on Seargeant (2010) for a taxonomy of names for English in contemporary studies of English. Its explanation of “functional” labels for English help to clarify prevalent orientations to English within English language teaching (ELT). The taxonomy enables examination of the underlying assumptions of the salient features highlighted by various labels. In this sense, the taxonomy offers analytic support for interpreting the meanings attached to labels like English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) as well as those that Emirati pre-service teachers may generate.. After that, I shift to two ecological models and explain insights gleaned about key dimensions of social experiences relating to how people use English and other languages in an English-medium environment.

4.3.1. Seargeant’s taxonomy of names of English

Seargeant (2010) examines the multitude of meanings that the concept of English generates within ELT and other academic discourses. He cogently argues that “one of the most contested concepts is denoted by the term, ‘English’ itself” (p. 97). He explains that names for English are inherently “unstable and disputed” (p. 100) and respond to a societal need to call into being a concept which has some basis in the phenomena of daily life. As World Englishes scholar, he observes that the vagueness of the term, English, is not problematic for everyday purposes, but is a problem for academic scholarship where “the detailed analysis of the nature of

the chosen object of study” (p. 98) requires precision. His taxonomy highlights the heterogeneity of names in contemporary studies of English in ways that extend commonplace meanings of English, such as a body of literature or the attributes of England as a place and a people. In so doing, the taxonomy provides an in-depth survey of the range of possible conceptions of English.

Of note, Sargeant (2010) argues that labels for English foreground particular aspects of the phenomenon, such as its linguistic form, social purpose or theoretical motivation. Labels of English then not only bear meanings about the salient features and relevant social contexts, but also research priorities grounded in diverse academic traditions. These interests vary in focus, such as with the use of slang in urban settings or written texts from a particular era in time. He identifies that the process of ascribing names is inherently a social act. This process entails calling into being a particular understanding of the social phenomena and has one of two routes: “the concept of the language variety will either be the theorist’s interpretation of pre-existing phenomena or an idealised arrangement or modification of existing phenomena” (p. 99). He posits that theorists and researchers either foreground select features of English while relegating others to the background or represent experiences of English in new and altered ways, which, in turn, provides ways to evaluate claims made about English. As such, labels will vary in terms of authority. The level of authority of labels in circulation depends on the pedigree of the theorist and academic community subscribing to the shared view.

This taxonomy serves as a valuable framework for several reasons. First, it helps to interpret the range of conceptions of English studies embedded in EMI research studies. Secondly, it helps to evaluate the participants’ rationales in terms of salient features and

associated disciplinary interests. Thirdly, it helps limit my reliance on the currency of dominant perspectives of English, such as English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) or English as an international language (EIL). In these ways, it provides a useful analytic platform for scrutinising perspectives of English held by Emirati pre-service teachers.

4.3.1.1. Classifications of labels for English

In this taxonomy, there are six classifications of names for English which can assist in my theorising. These classifications refer to underlying interests in the following: 1) function; 2) community; 3) history; 4) structure; 5) ecology; and 6) so-called “multiplex” (Seargeant, 2010, pp. 100-108). In other words, various academic disciplines characterise their own perspectives of English to delineate parameters for studying English. Functional perspectives concentrate on the purposes that a desired variety of English serves education. Functional names include ESL and EFL. Functional labels demarcate how and why the language should be taught in educational domains.

Other classifications highlight different aspects of English. For instance, a community orientation accounts for a particular variety of English hosted by a speech community. For instance, the label of ‘Indian English’ in World Englishes research carries concern for codified patterns of English language use within a national frame of reference. A historical orientation examines the evolution of a variety of English over time. As shown in Crystal (2001), a historical approach to English language development accounts for social and political influences, contributing to linguistic divergences from a standard variety, such as the development of creoles as well as English as a global language. A structural interest focuses on linguistic features of

standard and new varieties. In other words, linguistics and applied linguistics carry a structural interest in the formal features of English, such as its grammar or the morphology of words. In contrast, an ecological approach examines how language users adapt a variety of English within their linguistic repertoires and communicate using several modalities and languages from the broader speech community (Hornberger, 2002). The last classification addresses the developmental trajectory of English from local language to world language which anticipates “a world language speech community (Brutt-Griffler, 2002, p. vii). Although Seargeant presents the six classifications as distinct, I recognise from professional practice that conceptions of English are interrelated with distinctions blurred. A further caveat is that EMI is not included in the taxonomy, leaving this concept under-addressed.

4.3.1.2. Relationships of English as a medium of instruction to English language teaching

EMI and ELT refer to different teaching practices as concern the focus of English. This section offers a brief discussion of the relationships of the various labels for English and their disciplinary interests in order to show how this is applied for educational purposes. In brief, ELT concerns a process of gaining proficiency in English often to serve other subsequent social or academic purposes; however, the use of EMI often presumes mastery has taken place. Yet, this is not always the case. Often experiences with ELT precede its use as a medium of instruction (Coleman, 2006) but sometimes the language is learned as the content is learned. In this case, processes of learning English overlap with learning in English as in the case of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). A further distinction is that the focus of EMI is disciplinary knowledge from an array of fields. In ELT, the focus is on English as a language and

language acquisition processes, drawing from conceptual understandings in linguistics, education and intercultural communication. Ideally, teachers dealing with EMI and ELT both require awareness of how to use English effectively to optimise student learning in a language that is not the home language. However, as Coleman (2006) says, decisions about EMI programming usually are not based on recommendations from ELT professionals. Yet, interest within ELT organisations is growing and is set to expand into EMI pedagogy (Dearden, 2014) suggesting forthcoming developments of EMI pedagogy. Although Seargeant's taxonomy does not include EMI, its overview of academic interests in English enables classifying those which have a functional interest in terms of their perspectives of how English should be taught in educational domains.

4.3.1.3. Functional labels in educational discourses

Of the six categories, a functional orientation carries concern for English in educational settings. Prevalent functional labels include EFL, ESL, EIL and ELF. As readily observable, functional labels use “English” followed by the same prepositional phrase, “as a,” to identify the role, function or status of English for English learners. Seargeant (2010), however, does not include EMI, leaving the phenomenon under-examined. However, EMI studies use ESL, EFL, or EIL to explain, justify, or critique the social implications of using EMI. This same relationship does not occur among other functional labels. For instance, ESL never justifies its value as EFL. For this reason, it is not adequate to conclude that EMI is the same order of functional label. Despite the primacy of EMI in educational domains, the label, EMI, does not direct how English should be taught. The only specification is that it should be used by the teacher. This distinction hones in on the terminological complexities reported with EMI (Coleman, 2006; Dearden, 2014)

since there are many possible ways the teacher can use English when teaching, and, for that matter, many more possible ways that students can respond.

4.3.1.4. Kachru's model and ESL and EFL labels

Kachru (1992) offers meaningful distinctions of the functional classifications of ESL and EFL in education in his classic model of three concentric circles of speakers. Some clarification of these labels is needed since they are unsystematically used in the UAE literature base as explained in chapter two. ESL and EFL delineate particular relationships to EMI. His model refers to the global spread of English to schematise English-speaking contexts around the world into three categories: inner circle, outer circle and expanding circle. It makes links to social, political and historical dimensions of English use in each jurisdiction. These conditions clarify the aims and orientations of ELT. Typifications of ESL and EFL contexts have been criticised for being outdated and overemphasizing national patterns of use. Yet, as Matsuda (2012) aptly puts it, the labels are conceptually useful since they provide “a convenient way to capture the various functions that English performs in different parts of the world” (p. 1). Currently, other labels, such as ELF and EIL, dominate but garner criticism for not specifying how English can and should be taught, leaving the matter for teachers to decide (Galloway & Rose, 2015). In contrast, traditional distinctions of the role and status of English in ESL and EFL contexts do address who teaches English, which model of English informs classroom practices, and where and how EMI fits into educational systems.

4.3.1.5. Relationships of ESL and EFL to EMI

In the three concentric circles model, the inner circle describes an English-dominant social reality, where typifications include the use of English among native English speakers as a home and public language (Kachru, 1992). This pattern of language use has generated associations of English serving a monolingual reality, although this assumption should be contested for not attending to patterns of mass immigration in many societies (Mahboob, 2014). This pattern lies outside the focus of this study because the UAE's orientation to Arabic does not fit the sociolinguistic realities of where English is acquired in the home. ESL and EFL describes social experiences in and beyond educational settings in countries where English is not the dominant language, which Dearden (2014) calls "non-anglophonic" (p. 2).

In brief, the outer circle refers to ESL contexts where there are choices over which language to use. Fellow English users in this context may be culturally-different or have a different home language yet belong to the same national community, or, anticipate being interactants in shared public domains. In general, English-medium education has a historical foundation in schooling in outer circle contexts due to British colonial interests (Graddol, 2006). In turn, EMI responds to local needs for intranational as well as international communication. In EFL contexts, however, interaction in English occurs with foreign interactants from international communities outside the national community and EMI appears in higher education (HE) in response to global aspirations of the tertiary sector (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Because these typifications afford many qualifications due to various global dynamics and international processes, and not just in the case of the UAE, labels like EIL and ELF are increasingly preferred

(Galloway & Rose, 2015). Nevertheless, the next section reviews the traditional distinctions of ESL and EFL and the interest in these labels in the UAE literature base.

4.3.1.6. EFL or ESL in the UAE

The use of English in the UAE does not neatly fit the general characterisations of either EFL and ESL as outlined above. As explained in chapter one, the UAE was not a former British colony although it was a protectorate (Davidson, 2005) but EMI has long held a normative role in private schooling and in HE, which is a feature of an ESL orientation. As Kachru (1992) recognised, distinctions between ESL and EFL labels are important primarily because it signals the appropriate standard for English in teaching in countries that do not regard English as a native language. Two decades ago, Graddol (1997) speculated that the UAE's linguistic shift from EFL to ESL was "largely undocumented and unqualified" (p.12), necessitating empirical evidence. Such research is necessary to ascertain the sociocultural purposes of English, which, in turn, can help ascertain how English should be taught.

Furthermore, as mentioned in chapter two, its use with - and among - non-citizens has generated significant research and commentary leading to a plethora of names. Yet its use among fellow nationals has not been examined although its use as a main language of instruction in federal HEIs has been mandated for several decades (Findlow, 2006). According to Suliman (2000), English was taught nationally as a foreign language in government schools by Arabic-speaking expatriate teachers in the year before the birth of the Abu Dhabi educational authority (ADEA). Gallagher (2011) explains that ADEA mandated the compulsory use of EMI in public schools "to give equal prominence to English" (p. 63) in the Abu Dhabi emirate in 2010 in order

to offer “equality of access for all to the additional linguistic, cultural and social capital ... [and address] exasperation amongst leaders of the tertiary sector” (p. 68) over low levels of English proficiency among school leavers, and, as a result, excessive expenditures for university foundation programmes.

4.3.1.7. Other functional labels in the UAE

As raised in chapter two, the UAE literature base features unsystematic use of other functional labels, such as English as an additional language (EAL), EIL and ELF. Of note, Badri and Al Khaili (2014) refer to theoretical arguments about ESL to explain issues with teaching EFL in Abu Dhabi when “[f]or better or worse, English is the international language” (p.208). In addition, they refer to curricular influences from Singapore and South Korea respectively without discriminating that the former has an ESL orientation while the latter fits EFL. The label, EAL, also appears in a study on the co-teaching atmosphere of ADEA’s kindergarten (Dillon, Salazar, & Al Otaibi, 2015). In this case, EAL refers to a form of bilingual education with two teachers, an Arabic speaker and an English teacher, in the classroom, who somehow teach together using the two languages “simultaneously during whole-group instruction” (p. 23). Their findings show that Arabic-medium teachers disliked this format since students waited for Arabic translations, signalling practices not in keeping with the model of balanced bilingualism. Although Ruiz (1988) argues orientations to language in language education reflect a range of ideological orientations as a resource, problem or right, the case of the UAE suggests confusion among teachers, researchers and policy makers about the integration of English and Arabic in respect to curricular changes.

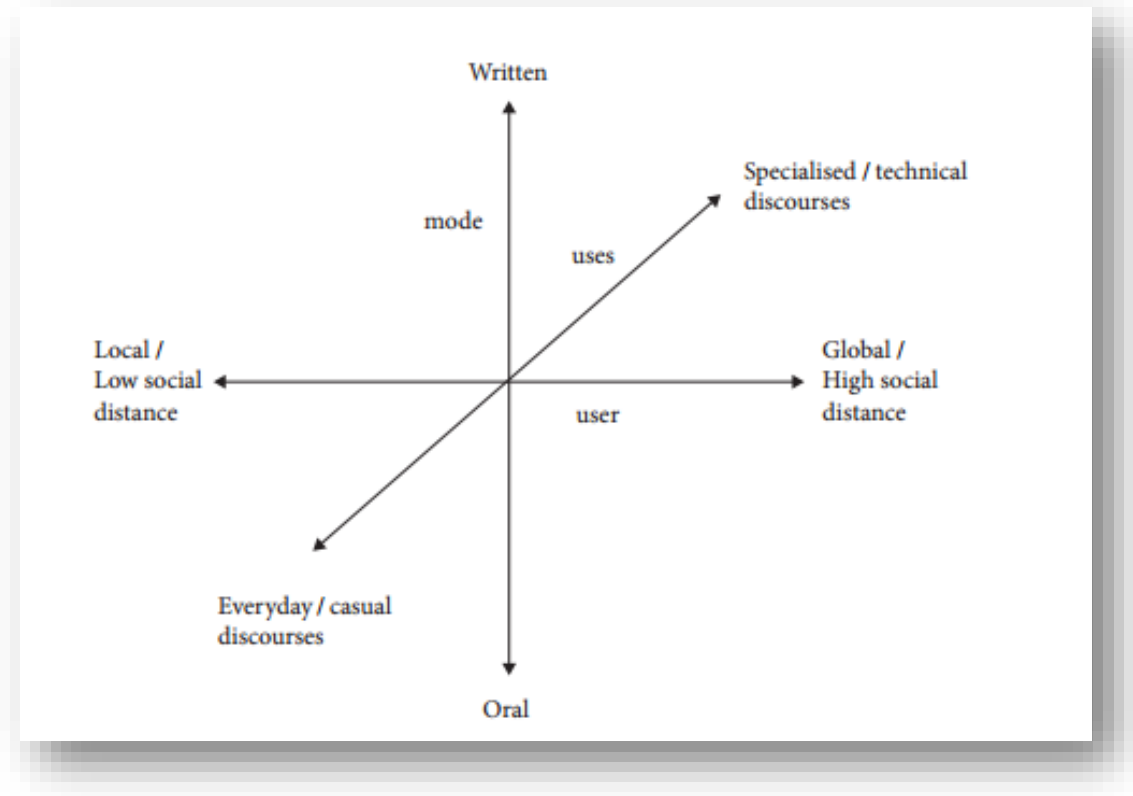
4.3.2. English language variation in ecological models

This section turns to two models of English that specifically deal with multilingual users and linguistic variation. They enable some sense-making of the range of labels for English in the UAE. By calling attention to variable forms and functions of English, Mahboob (2014) proposes a model of language variation, which represents “individual clines or continuums that influence language choices” (p.1) Pakir (1991) offers an “expanding triangles” (p. 167) model based on home and school uses that represents linguistic variation within individual linguistic repertoires according to proficiency and formality. I use these models as thinking tools for stimulating new ways of thinking about how English use can be configured that accounts for its use as a medium of instruction and other social purposes.

4.3.2.1. Mahboob’s Model of Language Variation

Mahboob (2014) proposes a model, which accounts for how English varies in and across societies. His model draws on functional grammar (Derewianka, 1990; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013) for its attention to users, uses and mode of communication. In so doing, he uses these three dimensions to schematise variation to suggest that there are everyday and specialised discourses, written or spoken interactions, and local or global users.

Figure 1: Model of Language Variation (Mahboob, 2014)



The model maps language variation into quadrants to show how language output varies in terms of social purposes which, in turn, affects the form of the language used, as seen in slang, local dialects, national varieties, and a lingua franca. He then characterises the range of interaction from “friends writing letters to each other [...] to] conference presentations” (p. 1). He does this to point out which domains of social activity are prioritised in various research traditions.

As displayed in Figure 1, users, uses and written or spoken mode can be applied to the use of English in HEIs in ways that manifest a naming process: “the theorist’s interpretation of pre-existing phenomenon” (Seargeant, 2010, p. 99). In this sense, his model suggests ways to see

EMI as a set of local interactional patterns, which accord with particular quadrants in the model. While he proposes its use as of value for teaching EIL (Mahboob, 2014), I recognise its value for describing interactional patterns at the TTC. The model accounts for changes in register, as seen when people use language in the cafeteria versus a graduation ceremony. The model accounts for different expectations of spoken versus written exchanges.

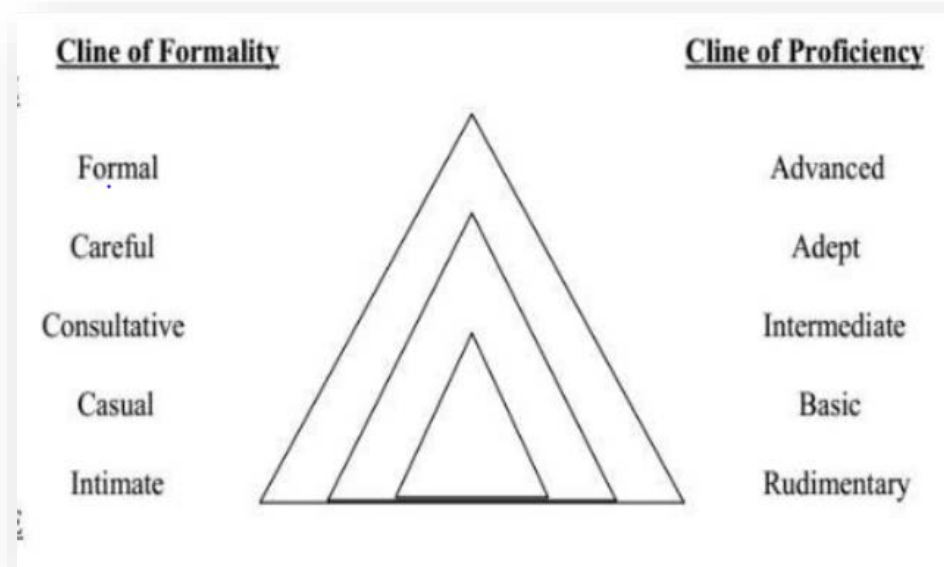
4.3.2.2. Pakir's Model of Expanding Triangles of English Expression

Similarly, Pakir (1991) refers to clines of linguistic variation, but she uses expanding triangles to show different degrees of linguistic sophistication based on formality of the situation as well as the degree of education of the speaker. She draws on the sociocultural context of Singapore to show that high and low varieties of English are present in daily life for a broad spectrum of Singaporean society. According to Ling (2010), “speakers with the largest triangle of expression are those with a very high level of proficiency in English and are therefore able to switch effortlessly between colloquial and standard Singapore English” (p. 439) This model shows that speakers shift their way of speaking according to the social context.

Her model exemplifies a second pathway for labeling English according to “idealised arrangement or modification of existing phenomenon” (Sergeant, 2010, p. 99). Pakir’s model is based on her observations during an era of social tensions about Singaporean English generated by a social programme called the Speak Good English movement. In so doing, her model shows diglossic conditions where educated users with advanced proficiency may switch from a national variety of English in formal settings (i.e. Standard Singaporean English) to a way of talking with

a greater amount of word borrowing from local dialects when in informal circumstances (i.e. Colloquial Singaporean English).

Figure 2: Model of expanding triangles of English expression (Pakir, 1991)



In this way, she shows that English language variation occurs within individual linguistic repertoires. She also positions English users as modifiers of English who take cues from the local social context. Socio-economic factors are also important forces which mediate advancement to the highest level of English expression. Her model shows that educated English users can readily adjust ways of speaking according to their reading of the social domain. English then is conceptualised as a knowledge base and a skill set for “uniquely defined English-knowing bilingualism” (Pakir, 2004, p. 117) framed by the local linguistic ecology.

Both models convey that English linguistic variation reflects social experiences developed in multilingual communities. Pakir (2004), writing from the vantage of multilingual Singapore, attests that “English as a worldwide presence is not the same phenomenon everywhere” (p. 233) and her model also schematises how English varies for individual users. It draws on lived experiences with high and low varieties of English in Singapore. Similarly, Mahboob (2014) argues that “English, as many people understand it, is more a set of myths than reality” (p. 1) and takes insights from Englishes in the Middle East (Mahboob, 2013; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). His model of English language variation interprets the social context according to types of user, purposes of interaction, and the spoken or written mode of communication. Both models are valuable for supporting my thinking about the use of EMI in terms of social situations with local and dynamic forms of English. They highlight the salience of linguistic variation, linguistic repertoires, and linguistic ecology for the main study.

In sum, in this section, I reviewed classifications for the names of English and highlighted functional orientations of ESL and EFL labels appearing in educational contexts (Seargeant, 2010). I also introduced other orientations reflecting different disciplinary interests, such as applied linguistics with its focus on the formal features and an ecological orientation with concerns with English use within a linguistic speech community. Then I introduced two models of linguistic variation: Mahboob’s (2014) Model of Language Variation and Pakir’s (1991) Model of Expanding Triangles of English Expression. Both models enhanced my thinking about linguistic clines and social contexts of English use. To date, these ecological models have not been applied to this Arabic-speaking context but stimulate my thinking about the use of English at the TTC and among Abu Dhabi’s multilingual residents.

4.4. Theoretical framework

The section turns to a theoretical framework capable of interpreting the relationships of social interaction to learning, which I noted from the PS findings would be useful. The purpose of this section is to highlight my rationale for incorporating social constructionism as the theoretical framework into this study. In this section, I examine key understandings of knowledge, learning and languages in terms of two basic phases of gaining knowledge across a person's life span, *primary socialisation* and *secondary socialisation*, and the role of a common language in this process. I also discuss the potential of *tertiary socialisation* to contend with the use of an alternate language when among intercultural others. These concepts stimulated my thinking about the introduction of English into the lives of Emirati pre-service teachers and its subsequent use as a medium of learning at the TTC.

4.4.1. *Social construction of reality*

Berger and Luckmann (1971) provide a treatise on the social construction of reality, which provides a theory of reality which is said to be “at once realist and relativist” (Crotty, 1998, p. 63). In this framework, knowledge refers to “the certainty that phenomena are real and that they possess certain characteristics” (Berger & Luckmann, 1971, p. 13). This theoretical framework provides a means to consider English as a meaningful construct and a lived reality (Pakir, 2009) and my own evolving views of the social dimensions of language use, learning and teaching and the process of gaining knowledge at the TTC. In addition, disciplinary support in ELT for this theoretical framework appears primarily for its capacity to account for the epistemological bases of qualitative research (Harklau, 2011).

Several facets of the treatise on the social construction of reality are particularly appealing. These include the following theoretical propositions: 1) knowledge develops dynamically via lifelong social and communicative processes; 2) intercultural learning functions as a distinct type of socialisation via interaction with people from other cultural backgrounds; and, 3) a dialectical view of power wherein social structure constrains individual action, and individual and collective participation mediates the experience of institutional structures in ways that account for personal agency. These propositions resonate with personal reflections on researching in a space where my professional role as an educator finds me interacting with culturally different students and teachers, and evaluating students and supervisors who, in turn, also evaluate my performance as a teacher. They inform my interest in examining conceptions of English and the social influences which mediate conceptions of English. The next sections discuss the treatise in terms of knowledge, learning and language use for what it implies for student perspectives of the meanings and use of EMI at the TTC.

4.4.2. Views of Knowledge

Berger and Luckmann (1971) refer to views of everyday life that are taken-for-granted, describing this as vital knowledge of the social world. They also account for how knowledge of the world is socially distributed. For Berger and Luckmann, the “social stock of knowledge” (p. 59) is the sum total of all that is tacit to group members and perceived as common sense and, thus, objectively real. In this sense, a shared reality for Emirati pre-service teachers and their teachers at the TTC means the mutual recognition of externally located phenomena, such as the features of the English language and its proper role as a medium of instruction in HE. My study examines perspectives of a shared reality of meanings of English as well as individual

perspectives of routine ways of using EMI. It also seeks to investigate all possible understandings of English in the TTC setting and in other Abu Dhabi domains.

Berger and Luckmann (1971) also describe the “social distribution of knowledge” (p. 94) and discuss the development of knowledge in terms of role-specific and subjectively relevant functions. As follows, I posit that English knowledge is neither equally distributed nor uniformly conceptualised within Emirati society, and, furthermore, Emirati pre-service teachers have access to a distinct knowledge base from their training at the TTC. Government mandates provide particular social justification for the TTC to train EMTs to carry out social functions related to teaching young Emiratis, but individual, Emirati pre-service teachers may highlight particular functions of this social role. They may also experience various social influences and, in turn, may have different subjective responses to them. I suggest that Emirati pre-service teachers experience various social influences and that their differing responses to these social influences shapes meanings of English. Various social influences may also affect individual interest in learning English and mastering it for learning in English and teaching in English. As such, there is scope to position the participants as college-educated females as homogeneous for sharing a social reality as students at the TTC yet heterogeneous in terms of having different levels of English proficiency and rationales for mastering English for its use as Abu Dhabi residents, pre-service teachers, and future EMTs.

In addition, interpretations of the value of learning and using English may vary according to the quality of influence of family members. I recognise that mothers and fathers and other family members of Emirati pre-service teachers could influence conceptions of the value of English for UAE society. For instance, if mothers with comparatively less formal education than

their daughters, could promote the value of English learning highly, or alternatively, with less exposure to English, they could value Arabic for cultural or religious reasons. Accordingly, I can expect that Emirati pre-service teachers as a social group will have a range of perspectives which, in turn, may also shift and mutate based on how they negotiate input about English from various social influences. These influences extend beyond the college to the home and other social domains, and, as such, warrant an ecological perspective (Charise, 2007; Duff & Lier, 1997; Van Lier, 2006). This study then aims to examine the range of ideas that Emirati pre-service teachers have about what English is, what English means to them, and how they report using English in respect to key influences in their social worlds.

As concerns bodies of knowledge accessed via studying in the degree programme at the TTC, it is important to point out that the programme features various dynamic orientations to English developed within distinct disciplinary traditions, subsequent interpretations of a range of course developers, and implementation of the teachers. To elaborate, courses related to the pedagogy of English, mathematics and science all use EMI, but are host to different orientations to English carried by distinct disciplinary interests in the language. Similarly, I can anticipate that teachers' perspectives of how to use EMI at the college and its importance of academic literacy in English on gaining content knowledge will vary. As such, I anticipate variability in terms of the experience of learning in English at the TTC. In addition, each teacher's professional knowledge, interpretations of the original vision of the college, and allegiance to the visions of various expatriate and Emirati managers will undoubtedly vary and affect how they deliver the content in English.

Similarly, a further mediating factor on Emirati pre-service teachers' perspectives of English are an array of social interactions in English and Arabic with classmates, teachers and other members of the HE and schooling communities. These include different nationalities of English-using interactants as well as different purposes for communicating in English at the TTC. It is important to point out that the use of English is not bound to interactions in the classroom. English is used in various domains at the TTC. Although my concern is English use in an English-medium HEI, my focus should not be limited to classroom-based interactions about mathematical, scientific or linguistic content. From experience in the setting, I hear English used in many venues inside and outside the college, such as hallway conversations about personal matters and professional discussions in public forums.

Furthermore, I am also aware that English proficiency is necessary for teaching internships in classroom settings with Emirati children. In these social situations, it is possible that English is not the only language used since Arabic is a shared language in this speech community. It is also possible that the form of English may differ as Emirati pre-service teacher address how to make the content accessible to young learners with emerging literacy skills. In this sense, Emirati pre-service teachers' perspectives of EMI and their reports of its use may reflect varied social experiences, including experimentation with using EMI to teach. In sum, it is necessary to investigate social experiences in and beyond classrooms at the TTC and survey reports of its use in the campus and attendant social domains more broadly, and, to do so by drawing on social constructionism to interpret the participants' accounts.

As follows, I position Emirati pre-service teachers at the TTC as having varied lived experiences, and aware of navigating a wide range of social influences within the campus and

beyond. I view Emirati pre-service teachers as capable of engaging with distinct bodies of knowledge in this HEI, and, in turn, contending with a range of conceptions of English framed by differing disciplinary interests and traditions. I also position the pre-service teachers as holding varying interpretations of the value of learning and using English in their speech communities.

4.4.2.1. Pre-theoretical knowledge

For Berger and Luckmann (1971), the social stock of knowledge concerns what is known about phenomena in the world and one's relationship to it. This kind of knowledge is largely pre-theoretical. Pre-theoretical views of English reflect values and normative drives, which are the foundation of knowledge claims. Linguistic expressions, vocabulary, proverbs and folktales are examples of pre-theoretical views. Similarly, other examples are names and labels for English, such as British English, American English, and EIL, which convey broader understandings of what English is for in UAE society and its significance. Accessing *pre-theoretical knowledge* is pertinent to my study because this kind of knowledge reveals what Emirati pre-service teachers think about the phenomenon of English in their social worlds and what they should do with this knowledge. This means I should ask for descriptions of what English is and the characteristics it has when used in the college. Descriptions of English and using English can reveal underlying conceptions of English.

Similarly, metaphors allow some insight into the weight or value of certain features of English. Paying attention to the participants' metaphors of English can help interpret if, or when, they view English as a problem, a resource or a right (Ruiz, 1988). By eliciting accounts of

everyday realities using English and listening carefully to how English is described, it is possible to gain access to their perspectives of the place of English in their daily lives. Based on my reflections of working at the TTC, Emirati pre-service teachers use “we” statements or speak of “our traditions” to refer to a shared Emirati worldview. By drawing on this way of framing experiences with English, I can anticipate accessing pre-theoretical views. Orienting my questioning to literal and figurative descriptions of how English features in daily life provides access to both individual and collective perspectives of the place of English in UAE society.

4.4.2.2. Theories

Berger and Luckmann (1971) describe theories as forms of complex explanations, which are ultimately “not that important in society” (p. 26). Theories are a more explicit form of knowledge administered by specialists, whose social impact may be limited in contrast with everyday views, or pre-theoretical knowledge held by other members of society. In addition, the content of theories differs by domain, function and relevance. In this sense, the conceptual models described in chapter 4.3 (Kachru, 1992; Mahboob, 2014; Pakir, 1991), while valuable to me, may be both unfamiliar and uninteresting to Emirati pre-service teachers as they are not part of the TTC curriculum. In addition, such theories may not be readily accessible. Accordingly, it is not relevant to ask explicit questions about such models or theories.

In general, Berger and Luckmann (1971) do not regard theories to be accessible, seeing them as marginal to the daily functions of the larger social group. However, some qualifications are due. For instance, it is possible that theories figure as part of knowledge generation and transmission processes (p. 27) at the college. As such, listening for references to theories and

ideological stances appearing in Emirati pre-service teachers' accounts of English can offer insight into inter-subjective meaning-making processes in HE that mediate conceptions of English. Such processes could include significant alliances with certain teachers who talk about theories they espouse, or the participants' self-directed reading on theories they encountered via coursework. Similarly, other social influences, such as the local media and social media may introduce theoretical perspectives regarding English use and ELT practices, which, in turn, could mediate individual and shared conceptions of English.

4.4.2.3. Symbolic universes

Pre-theoretical views and theories integrate into an all-inclusive frame of reference that individuals draw on to make sense of how the world operates. Berger and Luckmann (1971) refer to “symbolic universes” (p. 10) as a worldview to show the individual's place in the whole world. In a symbolic universe, the life situation of the individual is rather insignificant in the bigger picture of the world as a whole, but it is conceptually useful for the individual since the symbolic universe helps the individual to locate a role in the totality (p.113). In the Abu Dhabi context, I understand that an Islamic worldview shaped by tensions between Bedouin cultural traditions and global forces (Fox et al., 2006) represent a kind of symbolic universe for Emirati pre-service teachers. As a symbolic universe, it has the “meaning-bestowing capacity” (Berger & Luckmann, 1971, p. 114) to shape individual perspectives. In other words, this kind of worldview provides a basis to interpret the relevance of various phenomena, encountered in everyday life, including the phenomena of English. Pre-theoretical views of everyday experiences of English serve as the building blocks for salient theories about the place of English

in UAE society. At the same time, pre-theoretical views are parts of symbolic universes, which contain all that is known and not yet known.

4.4.2.4. Interpretive schemes

Un-resolvable problems, such as a perceived threat of a new language to a social group, reflect a change in the social stock of knowledge and threaten to change understandings of how the phenomena in the world operate. In this sense, tensions or contradictions appear as disruptions to the world as it is known. As evidenced by the themes in the UAE literature base presented in chapter two, English is cast as a problem for Emirati culture and a threat to Arabic. Such themes provide a basis to view the increased use of English as a disruption to the social world. To this end, Berger and Luckmann (1971) describe “interpretive schemes” (p. 181) as explanations made by the group to cope with disruptions and re-instate equilibrium. Interpretive schemes then serve as important ready-made rationales for changed behaviours and other forms of social transformations by internal or external forces. By listening closely to the participants’ explanations of issues linked to the use of English, their rationales for these issues, as well as their reported responses to potential threats, I can gain insights into their interpretive schemes.

Close attention to the explanations of problems or threats associated with the use of English can help to assess the degree of stability of the conceptions of English. It can also help to identify the nature of the disruptions English use engenders, and the social and linguistic responses taken to address the perceived threat relating to the introduction of English to their society. Interpretive schemes also indicate the kind of communicative processes, which generate or mediate the explanations. In this way, conversations with teachers and peers at the TTC or,

possibly, other social figures from the wider Arabic-speaking community can be sources of interpretive schemes. Accordingly, listening carefully for problems related to English use and interpretive schemes used to explain these problems can provide insight into the social influences shaping conceptions of the use of English at the English-medium TTC. By the same token, evaluative accounts of English use can also reflect interpretive schemes where English is cast as a resource or a right (Ruiz, 1988).

4.4.3. *Views of Learning*

As explained above, the treatise posits knowledge as the integrated working assumptions guiding thoughts and actions in daily life. Knowledge then is accessible to group members. In this sense, access to knowledge delineates group membership and the social group delineates the purposes knowledge serves and other aspects of the context of its use. In this framework, knowledge construction entails an ongoing interpretation and re-interpretation of phenomena and a range of appropriate responses to them, which relies on daily conversations in formal and informal contexts. Berger and Luckmann (1971) describe gaining knowledge of the world as a complex, social, meaning-making process occurring across a person's life span. This meaning-making process consists of two main phases of socialisation: *primary* and *secondary socialisation*. In both phases, conversational activities mediate processes of learning what can be known.

4.4.3.1. *Primary Socialisation*

Berger and Luckmann (1971) distinguish between phases of knowledge construction in childhood and adulthood by the dynamics of socialisation. The socialisation process occurring in

childhood, called “primary socialization” (p. 149), differs from later phases of socialisation according to aims of knowledge acquisition, relationship of group members in the physical environment, and quality of engagement with the knowledge construction process. In childhood, the process of knowledge construction concerns the first apprehension of the requirements language and behaviours for daily interaction and the learning zone in the family home. This emotionally charged domain offers the most potent quality and quantity of social interaction. During this phase, the reality of the parents’ world appears real to the child and, thus, constitutes an apprehended reality, internalised as “the world.” The mother tongue is central to this process.

The process demands full engagement in acquiring the linguistic, behavioural and affective norms provided by the family group. The child has no choice over the contents of learning or the facilitators. The child internalises features of this reality, including the mother tongue, during this period. In this sense, the child is born into a world in which the parents, the hometown, the common language and social customs are given. This phase ends when the person develops an identity of the self as a member of a larger social group, such as a member of a national community or a speaker of a mother tongue, which help to establish the social identity of the individual. Accordingly, it is possible that the presence of English in the home domain during childhood socialisation processes signals that English may be a reality-defining influence, and hence, not a foreign language. Since daily conversations play a vital role for knowledge construction in primary socialisation, they have the power to introduce, reinforce and transform understandings of phenomena in the world as well as subjective experiences within the individual. As such, questions concerning the presence of English conversations within Abu

Dhabi homes offer some scope to explore the ways in which English serves primary socialisation processes.

4.4.3.2. Secondary Socialisation

A different dynamic occurs in the subsequent phase called “secondary socialization” (p.157). Secondary socialisation, as the form of knowledge construction occurring in educational institutions, involves the mediation of other relatively anonymous people, who structure learning in formal settings, such as occurs in HE. While daily conversations are essential for knowledge construction in primary socialisation for their power to introduce, reinforce and transform understandings of external phenomena or subjective, individual experiences, a concept of the kind of learning occurring in formal institutional contexts differs in quality from those occurring in the home domain during childhood. To be effective, special teaching techniques need to approximate the informal socialisation of the home domain in the early years of life during primary socialisation. The kinds of conversations experienced in secondary socialisation differ in type and emotional intensity from primary socialisation but, when effective, can extend and modify the social, emotional, behavioural and linguistic codes internalised in primary socialisation. Conversational activity among teachers who structure learning for Emirati pre-service teachers in the TTC represents a key dimension of secondary socialisation.

During this phase, knowledge construction reflects the division of labour within the larger community. The kinds of knowledge and skills needed to perform discrete roles for the wider social group appears as a new knowledge base, which builds upon the existing understandings of the world. Instead of parents or family members providing the contents of

learning, a chronological sequence of high school and then HE teachers appears for the express purpose of teaching subsets of knowledge in the world. In this way, structured learning in secondary socialisation builds upon and extends the social, emotional, behavioural and linguistic codes internalised in primary socialisation. It differs, however, by end purposes or social aims. With the base world already established, new learning in this phase extends and modifies what is already known. This new knowledge is called “role-specific knowledge” (Berger & Luckmann, 1971, p. 159) and pertains to relevant knowledge for performing discrete social tasks as a member of a professional community with a particular social status within the broader community. To this end, proficiency in using English constitutes part of the required teacher-training knowledge for Emirati pre-service teachers. At the TTC, the use of EMI supports the professional development of a class of primary school teachers, who should take on specified social roles. As future EMTs, Emirati pre-service teachers are subject to judgements from members of their speech community based on the perceived value of using English. As members of a teaching community, they must make sense of these social roles while readying themselves to teach in English to children from the local Emirati community.

Compared to primary socialisation, the student has a greater degree of choice over what is to be learned and how it is learned in this phase. Secondary socialisation allows some choice over the contents of learning, such as which type of programme to undertake, as well as the level of effort or emotional engagement attached to the learning process. As concerning arrangements at the college, if an individual TTC student registers for the degree programme, but evaluates the programme, course work deadlines, and even the teacher as unsatisfactory, the student can appeal for a change. In this way, it is possible for the student to designate the facilitators, the

setting, and, to some extent, the subject knowledge of the formal learning experience during secondary socialisation since other arrangements are possible. In addition, the student can regulate the degree of emotional commitment to learning the content and skills of the programme. In these ways, the student is both a recipient of knowledge and an active participant in creating new knowledge and applying bodies of knowledge to new social situations. In other words, the students can access knowledge from the process of learning in classroom settings but also interpret its relevance for other social domains.

As follows, TTC students encounter a range of ideas about English and they are also host to a range of ideas about the place of English outside this setting. Furthermore, as students, they are also members of several overlapping and evolving social groups, capable of constructing and negotiating various conflicting social influences. For my investigation, I position Emirati pre-service teachers as capable of distinguishing influences deemed socially meaningful and personally relevant from other influences that threaten current understandings of phenomena. In addition, I also recognise that their peers or other members of their social groups may not share the same perspectives of English. Such levels of complexity are important when describing Emirati pre-service teachers as the population sample.

These features of secondary socialisation accord agency to Emirati pre-service teachers. However, the relationship between the interactants at the TTC, namely as students to their teachers, and the use of EMI for knowledge gain merits further attention for constraining social and linguistic behaviours in this setting. Firstly, the focus of learning at the college is the acquisition of professional knowledge and skills befitting future employment as EMTs. To be effective, daily interactions with teachers should occur in English primarily for the transmission

of a subset of the required professional knowledge. As Berger and Luckmann (1971) attest, greater anonymity between teachers and students is normative in this phase of learning; however, the hiring of non-citizens for positions at the TTC as teachers could intensify the perception of anonymity and social distance. When TTC expatriate teachers interact with Emirati pre-service teachers, they are social outsiders as non-citizens. Although TTC teachers have necessary specialist knowledge, their commitment to fulfilling teaching duties with a high degree of intensity or intimacy may be constrained by fixed-term employment contracts and the subjective meanings accorded to being a temporary worker. As a non-citizen, it is expected that they will reside in the UAE for a duration of one or more contracts.

As suggested by Davidson (2009), expatriate professionals are not full members of the national social group in the UAE's "allocative state" (p. 128). In this dynamic, Emirati students have certain advantages as in-group members of a "natural upper class ... [including] preferential public treatment" (pp. 131-132). Teaching professionals are out-group members and culturally-different guests, hosted by the Emirati government. As evidenced at the TTC, Emirati students are the dominant majority but this composition reverses when outside the campus. In the wider social milieu of Abu Dhabi, Emirati citizens are a linguistic and cultural minority group, yet, in many public domains, distinctions in dress signal a higher status for those wearing Emirati traditional wear than those dressed in other national or contemporary attire. These observations describe some of further complex social dynamics, which limit the social status of expatriate teachers and challenge assumptions regarding the social power of English-speaking teachers. It is important to recognise that, in general, Emiratis constitute a linguistic minority yet remain a privileged social and cultural group in Abu Dhabi society.

4.4.3.3. Alternation

Primary and secondary socialisation are concerned with developing and expanding a sense of social reality and locating the individual's proper place within it. Berger and Luckmann (1971) describe these phases as chronological, dynamic yet fluid. They also identify a different set of practices for contending with a gross disruption to the original view of reality and the relationships between phenomena in the world and required individual responses. They define this kind of re-socialisation process as a radical transformation of the individual that serves to redefine reality. This process of "alternation" (p. 176) refers to taking on the worldview of another group, akin to instances of brainwashing and religious conversion. In alternation, mediators of the new worldview are important models of the new way of being and thinking, who also enforce separation from those who shared the old worldview in order to prevent a relapse to the old ways.

Alternation is a relevant construct for the current study because it suggests a plausible, if extreme, outcome for Emirati pre-service teachers in the English-medium environment at the TTC. While the state out-laws religious conversion from Islam to another religion, Emirati pre-service teachers may still engage in emotionally intensive ways with non-Emirati English-speaking teachers via the process of learning to use EMI as part of their professional transformation. As follows, in the case of alternation, Emirati pre-service teachers could potentially interact with select teachers as significant others who have a capacity to radically alter pre-existing understandings of the world.

The treatise also recognises that there may be partial transformation targeting one or two domains of the world, such as the educational domain. Berger and Luckmann (1971) suggest that this is like an intermediary phase in between secondary socialisation and alternation. This intermediary phase builds on the worldview established in childhood but without the complete rupture of the old way of being as demanded in alternation. In this phase, ready-made explanations, called interpretive schemes, as discussed earlier, appear and provide a degree of accommodation to the observed and experienced changes to thinking and behaving. This phase of partial transformation allows regular communication with significant others who play important roles in reconciling current changes with patterns developed in the past.

Berger and Luckmann (1971) conclude “such partial transformations are common in contemporary society in connection with the individual’s social mobility and occupational training” (p. 181). They offer scenarios like changing from a working-class job to a new lifestyle of a doctor and moving in new middle or upper class circles. In this case, significant others, such as parents, other family members and close friends may contest the new lifestyle orientations taken on by the partially transformed individual but ready-made explanations, or interpretive schemes, offer socially acceptable excuses that legitimise current patterns of thinking, behaviour, and communication. As such, ready-made explanations or justifications are critical in maintaining feelings of internal consistency in the changed persons. Ready-made explanations prevent a destabilising rupture from the past, and suggests the value of listening for such interpretations of changes brought on by learning experiences in English-medium settings.

4.4.3.4. Tertiary Socialisation

In the treatise, Berger and Luckmann (1971) gloss some details of this intermediary phase of partial transformation, when writing there are “many intermediate types” (p. 181). They offer intensive and impactful encounters with culturally-different others as a “special question” (p. 150) for knowledge construction, having certain under-defined features of both primary and secondary socialisation. Berger and Luckmann leave these dynamics unaddressed; however, this construct has generated significant theoretical insight in a third phase, referred to as “tertiary socialisation” (Alred & Byram, 2002, p. 339). In tertiary socialisation, patterns of re-socialisation appear given regularised interactions with so-called intercultural others.

The dynamics of tertiary socialisation, as reported in a longitudinal study of British international students who reside temporarily in a foreign country, offer some scope to consider interactions in a foreign language at the TTC as a form of partial transformation. The English-medium environment can similarly be construed as a foreign context, where “learners are surrounded by that other subjective reality as they interact with other social actors and, in accepting their language, are under pressure to accept their reality” (Alred & Byram, 2002, p. 342). As a foreign context, new ways of viewing the world and its phenomena co-exist and rest “side by side with existing ones” (p. 343) and function as a resource to be used whenever deemed relevant. Such a proposition offers scope to view the experience of using EMI at the TTC as a social resource but it remains to be seen how the language is construed when used as a medium of instruction.

In sum, these theoretical positions provide some ways of thinking about how Emirati pre-service teachers could conceptualise English, the use of EMI, and the people they meet at the college. The treatise suggests that the kinds of social experiences in HE reflect secondary socialisation. However, it is unclear how Emirati pre-service teachers view these experiences at the TTC. It could be a form of meaningful, albeit temporary, engagement with a professional community of English-speaking teachers, akin to tertiary socialisation. My reading of the treatise suggests that social influences external to the college which rest within individual social networks could mediate conceptions of English as well as conceptions of how English should be used at the college. In addition, it points to conditions where alternation could also apply. As such, my reading of these social processes at play in a domain of knowledge construction posits the necessity of exploring the quality of conversational activity in English, as reported by Emirati pre-service teachers when among their teachers and other members of the college for signs of participation in an altered reality.

4.4.4. Views of Language

Berger and Luckmann (1971) explain that a common language, or mother tongue, is essential for knowledge construction in childhood and adulthood. Conversing in a common language enables the acquisition of social norms and a sense of a shared reality. Hence, language is never neutral or benign. However, the overarching theoretical framework does not squarely examine the dynamics of when the status of the common language changes or the extent to which conceptual understandings of the world is affected. In addition, there is little insight into the processes brought to bear on the situation. They also conclude that language learning rarely results in the same intensity as primary socialisation. However, they do not address the question

of alternation in respect to language learning alone. That said, as concerns my study, there is some scope to examine the quality of disruptions and opportunities engendered by the daily use of an alternative language, such as English. Given that English takes on the role as a common language yet is not the mother tongue, the perspectives that Emirati pre-service teachers have of English can go some way to address this theoretical question. As noted in chapter two, the UAE literature offers many themes suggesting that both disruptions and opportunities are linked to the use of English in education.

Berger and Luckmann (1971) conclude that their analysis of the role of knowledge in society is “directly applicable to the problems of the sociology of language” (p. 207). They hope that their treatise will stimulate “critical discussions and empirical investigations” (p. 207). In my case, the constructs of secondary socialisation and alternation, and namely the reference to a partial transformation, can stimulate my analysis of the linguistic dynamics prompted by the use of EMI at the TTC. I should then listen for the ways in which Emirati pre-service teachers describe conversational activity in English. Their descriptions of their routinized experiences of learning role-specific, professional knowledge among culturally-different others can offer important insights for my study. Descriptions of how conversations in English happen offer a means of eliciting conceptions of English as an alternative language during this phase of socialisation in HE. In addition, Emirati pre-service teachers’ accounts of teaching in English to young children during teaching practicum indicate how they view the role of English for teaching and learning purposes. The participants’ viewpoints are valuable for EMI research since, as both learners and teachers, they are able to interpret and explain their dynamics of

primary and secondary socialisation, where “language constitutes the most important content and the most important instrument of socialization” (p. 153).

Related to this point, Berger and Luckmann (1971) explain that a common language, usually a mother tongue, serves many discrete referential and constitutive functions. It also serves as a “repository of vast accumulations of meaning and experience, which it can then preserve in time and transit to following generations” (p. 52). Use of a common language confers group membership and enables social participation. Consequently, the participants’ accounts of how they use a common language for daily face-to-face conversations can provide insights into reality-construction and reality maintenance processes. If Emirati pre-service teachers conceptualise English as a common language for a global community, then there is some scope to investigate which social domains confer global group membership. In this case, their accounts of the content of daily conversations in English can reveal their relationship to professional knowledge.

In turn, I can assess the transformative potential of social interactions with culturally-different others, and glean whether or not English is linked to a reconceptualised worldview. As pre-service teachers, the temporary or enduring significance of intercultural experiences in HE would highlight processes of knowledge accumulation among the current generations. References to English as a resource or a problem can direct attention to the dynamic relationship of what it means to be an Emirati who uses English among English-users having national, religious and linguistic identities. It is possible that the participants view English negatively as a newly introduced and foreign common language linked to judgements of EMI in relation to its local appropriateness and relative value. References to English as a foreign language would

highlight social distance, whereas labels, such as English as a second language, international language, or, even, a language of their own, would underscore the participants' awareness of bilingual and intercultural capacities. In this case, English is viewed positively as a resource, valued for serving as a common language in their social worlds. In sum, listening for suggestions that English should or should not be limited to educational domains and evaluations of English as a lingua franca among English-speakers from diverse backgrounds can offer insights into problems or opportunities associated with English.

Further considerations of a common language in education is taken up in the ELT and EMI literature bases. As suggested in this chapter, labels and metaphors of English and descriptions of conversations in English are construed as important for revealing subjective understandings of English and its place in education. In addition, the models issued by Pakir (1991) and Mahboob (2014) offer ways to describe varieties of English in use among particular people in particular social contexts. The treatise on the social construction of reality, however, provides salient theoretical schemas for analysing the relevance, intensity and locality of talk in English in formal learning domains. Berger and Luckmann (1971) refer to the potency of conversational activity in shaping reality in terms of its ongoing consistency and allows space for research concerning perspectives of English use in educational settings to address an important dimension of this special question of a common language. My study touches on this theoretical question by looking at conceptions of English language use for learning when interacting with culturally-different teachers and perceived implications for Emirati social worlds.

My study also addresses conceptual understandings of English, including linguistic and social features of English deemed salient. To this end, the ecological models are necessary for

drawing attention to the formal features of the kind of English used according to social domains of conversational activity. These models enrich my exploration of English language practices at the college, primarily because they offer ways to conceptualise English language variation when it is used as a common language amongst multicultural others.

In summary, Berger and Luckmann (1971) provide theoretical tools to interpret the participants' accounts of English use in various social domains, namely by investigating the location of English conversation along the participant's lifespan as well as by asking about the quantity and quality of conversational activity in English in HE. However, the ELT literature features conceptual designations of English, such as ELF, ESL EFL and EIL labels, which have been applied to identify the use of English as a common language within educational domains in the Arabian Gulf. I have pointed out the value of two ecological models for focusing my attention on key variables underpinning linguistic variation. These thinking tools build on the conceptual insights gleaned from the PS, discussed in chapter three. The next section then looks at procedural considerations and a methodological framework capable of addressing my questions about perspectives of English and English language use.

4.5. Methodological framework

This section serves to identify a methodological framework responsive to the research questions emerging from the PS and the particular contextual features of the research setting. As an exploratory, qualitative study, I use ethnographic methods to examine Emirati pre-service teachers' perspectives of English and the social influences which mediate their understandings. In this section, I provide an account of personal motivations and professional experiences which

informed my inquiry into “how something is seen and reacted to, and thereby meaningfully constructed, within a given community” (Crotty, 1998, p. 64). I also include reflexive understandings of my place within a qualitative research study carried out at my place of work.

4.5.1. Exploratory approach

I first conceptualised this study as an unfolding research project, which enabled the research questions to be honed as the study progressed (Punch, 2006). From the PS, I realised that the exploratory nature of my research questions and my study’s pointed concern with the meanings of English use generated in an Abu Dhabi educational context during a period of educational reforms warranted a qualitative study employing ethnographic methods. An exploratory, qualitative approach was an appropriate response to the dynamism and tensions I experienced within the research setting of the TTC and the wider city of Abu Dhabi. Early readings of Barbour (2008) on the practical and theoretical considerations of qualitative research, Hammersley (1992) on the value of descriptive insights for ethnographic research, and Holliday (2009) for his accounts of ethnographic research in English language education in international settings served as valuable guides through a demanding process as a full-time lecturer who researches in her workplace.

4.5.2. Personal motivations and professional experiences

My main interest with an exploratory study was to examine conceptions of English with fresh eyes and ears. Critical interests around knowledge and power exposed post-colonial stances towards the use of English in the Arab world (Karmani, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c), but the dynamics of how English is used alongside Arabic in the UAE was unevenly addressed (Charise, 2007). In

addition to omissions in the literature identified in chapter two, I also noted an emphasis on global forces and colonial powers but less discussion of national leaders and local decision-making processes. However, as explained in chapter one, my engagement at the college during a period of rise of an Abu Dhabi educational authority (ADEA). This period co-occurred with the waning influence of the Dubai's Ministry of Education, and suggested surreptitious Dubai-Abu Dhabi tensions not open for outside commentary. Given the rate of educational change prompted by an economic momentum at the emirate level, it seemed professionally necessary to understand how my Emirati students engaged with local dynamics and other social influences outside my view, primarily because my value to the TTC entailed developing appropriate English language methodology courses for Emirati pre-service teachers.

4.5.3. Researcher's disposition

When planning a research study, there are diverse views about how this should be done. Crotty (1998), in claiming that research methodology occurs against a backdrop of epistemological and ontological assumptions, argues that it is important for qualitative and quantitative researchers to come to terms with the philosophical bases of the research questions at the outset in order to direct the research and justify its aims. Early clarification of the researcher's view of knowledge, truth and reality can lead to succinct articulation of theoretical and methodological approaches. This phase of inquiry can then inform the selection of research methods.

Barbour (2008), in contrast, acknowledges that most qualitative researchers do not follow a linear construction of research. They begin with certain research questions in part based on the

researcher's disposition: personality, professional experience as well as disciplinary background (p. 11). Furthermore, she argues that primary attention to the data in terms of disciplinary interests is critical in coming to terms of the ways in which theory may be negligent. Support for this view is in medical education, where Ziebland and McPherson (2006) claim that analytic depth can be achieved from exploring the study's findings in relation to the themes established in the disciplinary and theoretical literature bases. It is Barbour's view of the research endeavour, a pragmatic concern with my professional experience in English language education, and my reading of disciplinary issues, which best explain my honing process.

4.5.4. Guidelines and predispositions for qualitative research

The literature on the conduct of qualitative research is rich with compatible but nuanced views regarding the parameters of social inquiry. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003) qualitative research is a composite field spanning inquiry into a number of disciplines and interests where no fixed rules exist, only guidelines, which evolve over time. Such guidelines include locating the researcher as a reflexive observer of aspects of the social world and for making these aspects visible yet not perfectly "captured" (p. 14). The scope of qualitative research does not lie with causality, numbers or strength of relationships but rather with a concern with how everyday social interactions are practiced in a bounded setting (Barbour, 2008). This orientation to qualitative research guides my documentation of audial reports and observed instances of the phenomena in question and the associated technical tasks pertaining to converting the data to text-based formats for dissemination among a discourse community. It also guided my understanding of the aims of qualitative research in terms of expanding

knowledge in ways that may affect change or engage in social dialogue pertaining to the issue studied (Gergen & Gergen, 2003).

Rather than guidelines, Barbour (2008) explains that predispositions guide the conduct of qualitative research. Yet, as she argues for predispositions, her writing is, in fact, full of guidance. She emphasises that qualitative research of social phenomena and processes allows participants to account for their place in daily life and, like others, she highlights truthfulness over truth claims and an iterative approach borne of contending with multiple standpoints and situated accounts. She also advises on the practical and theoretical distinctions of various approaches to qualitative research. More strikingly, she explains the necessity of paying close attention to detail via noticing typical and atypical accounts as well as the shades of meaning in individual accounts. Furthermore, she explains that breadth and depth can be achieved by focussing on the range and complexity of perspectives in a distinct setting. In so doing, she advises researchers to pay attention to the varying perspectives towards an issue and the kinds of decisions and behaviours taken in light of these perspectives since contradictions and illogical responses can signal shifts in perspectives. With this quality of attention, a potential for “polyvocality” (Gergen & Gergen, 2003, p. 595), where participants may express a range of potentially incompatible viewpoints. This way of viewing the research participants accords with my theoretical understandings of students in HE. As such, Barbour’s views provided vital direction on how to think about the breadth and depth of perspectives in a rich and complex social setting.

4.5.5. Ethnography as a research method

Hammersley (1998) remarks that ethnography is sometimes loosely defined. For instance, while ethnographic research deals with the interpretation of raw and relatively unstructured data collected via situated interactions between the researcher and the researched, the term ethnography can refer to either a process or a product as well as a people with a shared focus in studying people (Spradley, 1979), a theory (Hammersley, 1992) and also a paradigm (Blommaert, Dong, & Jie, 2010). When the researcher is also a participant in the research setting, ethnography as a research method, can enable “making sense of our surroundings” (Hammersley, 1998, p. 2) and support an engagement with the setting in which the researcher plays a part, which “yields empirical data about the lives of people in specific situations (Spradley, 1979, p. 13). My understanding of ethnography as a method suggests that there are various approaches and tools for researchers, which can be utilised to support gaining data on what people say and what they do (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995).

Spradley (1979) suggests ethnography with aims in understanding behaviour in complex society should serve humankind but Hammersley (1998) warns researchers using ethnographic methods about making claims concerning universal truths in the findings. He adds that they can never be made with certainty and that “the goal is still to represent reality, but in a way that is relevant to particular purposes” (p. 133). As such, he stresses the importance for ethnographic writing to clearly demarcate the general focus as well as the relationship of the focus to the particular, contextual features of the study. Accordingly, the general focus of this study is conceptions of English based on using it as a medium of instruction in HE and the particular, contextual influences, which mediate the conceptions of English of a particular group of Emirati

pre-service teachers during a particular phase of educational reforms in Abu Dhabi when EMI was first introduced for primary schooling.

In examining the debates generated by ethnographic research over the years, Hammersley (1992) identifies that tensions have primarily arisen from a lack of clarity over the purposes for contemporary ethnographic research. He argues that unexamined assumptions, such as truth claims resulting from “verbal descriptions and explanations” (p.2), are one source of the tensions, evident when assumptions in relation to theories and local practices are not interrogated. For instance, it is problematic when descriptive ethnographies, which offer specific details of a microcosm, are presented as objective reality or a neutral account since they represent perspectives which are structured by theoretical understandings about reality. Similarly, theory-driven explanations become problematic when abstractions developed from details of a particular case are reified, or cast as tangible and universally true.

By evaluating descriptive and explanatory claims in terms of their logical extremes, Hammersley (1998) challenges the extent to which ethnographic research today can serve to create new universalising theories or offer a pragmatic tool confined to solving problems based in professional practice if theoretical assumptions are not acknowledged. He also explains that while most ethnographic studies are primarily concerned with descriptions and explanations, it is less common to find ethnographies claiming “theoretical inference” (p. 53) in part because a concern with particular details is antithetical to universal generalisations. Accordingly, Hammersley offers a way of explaining my research aims in light of competing expectations for ethnographic research in ELT to offer wider theoretical relevance (Richards, 2009).

My way forward is to draw reflexively on both the theoretical and practical insights that a study of social phenomena, such as conceptions of English and EMI, presents to myself as a researcher nested in a particular research setting. That is, as a researcher-practitioner, my role is to construct accounts that offer insightful descriptions of a social microcosm, which “present phenomena in new and revealing ways” (Hammersley, 1992, p. 13). In other words, by being sensitised to the social group of Emirati pre-service teachers at the TTC, it is possible to generate deeper insights for theory-building endeavours, and, as importantly, to enhance social dialogue by adding compelling new ways to think about English and the use of EMI and the particular issues raised by students using EMI in the Arabian Gulf. These sources guided my thinking about the aims and purposes of qualitative research using ethnographic methods.

In summary, upon first encountering the social and linguistic dynamics at the TTC, an institution where I worked, I realised a qualitative approach using ethnographic methods was the best approach to making sense of the complex dynamics around me. The pace of rapid educational reform put in motion by an emerging emirate-level educational authority appeared as a key driver of change and a prominent social force not yet addressed in the regional literature. As Barbour (2008) acknowledges researchers can develop research questions in a non-linear approach based on their disposition and academic background. Her explanations of the research process helped me to clarify that my qualitative research was unfolding and exploratory. From careful reading of Hammersley (1992, 1998), I understood ethnographic methods best accommodated my situatedness at the TTC, which supported my stated aims for insightful descriptions. I then drew reflexively on the conceptual and practical insights afforded through engagement in the setting.

Summary of this chapter

To sum up, in this chapter, I first discussed the research questions, the research setting and conceptual insights from Seargeant (2010) pertaining to names and labels for English and from Pakir (1991) and Mahboob (2014) for their ecological models of English language variation. Careful reading of the conceptual literature base offered ways of thinking about the use of EMI at the TTC. These tools served to interpret the participants' references to daily interactions with a wide range of English users and different kinds of English. To this end, gathering data about who the participants used English with at the TTC, where they used a lot of English, and how they used English seemed an appropriate way to examine meanings associated with using EMI at TTC. In addition, this approach supported exploring ways of classifying English and shifts in linguistic repertoires. Also, I began to view the TTC as a language ecology. From this vantage, I began to explore how the use of EMI manifest in the participants' daily conversational practices.

I also described the theoretical importance of the treatise written by Berger and Luckmann (1971) for their assessment of two basic phases of socialisation. These phases define the social processes where an individual acquires conceptual understandings of the world as reality and subsequent refinements of the relationships of the various phenomena within this real world. I then contended with limitations of its explanatory scope for English as a common language, as first signalled by a study addressing tertiary student interest in learning new languages and encountering new multilingual others (Alred & Byram, 2002). These thinking tools helped me approach the TTC as a distinct kind of learning environment with culturally-different teachers, where the use of EMI served as a means of conveying meanings and making

sense of the world. I also shifted my attention to social influences outside of the college domain for acknowledgement of the potency of other members in society for mediating conceptions of English, which pointed to learning more about reported habits of conversing in English at the TTC and other social domains. I also considered that the participants might accommodate several perspectives as they navigated their social worlds.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. ETHNOGRAPHIC PROCEDURES

This chapter now turns to the ethnographic procedures taken and tools used in the main study. I begin with ethical procedures taken and issues arising from social constraints, which had a bearing on the research design. Then I provide an overview of the methodological tools used and procedures followed across three phases of data collection in section 5.2. In section 5.3, I describe the first phase of data collection. In this section, I discuss focus group discussions and attendant issues concerning linguistic reflexivity and criticality. In section 5.4, I describe my use of participant observations as the second phase of data collection with a focus on the particular ethical considerations taken for gathering field notes in this setting. Following that, I outline the use of in-depth ethnographic interviews in the third phase in section 5.5. Finally, in section 5.6, I describe in detail a four-staged process of generating themes using Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

5.1. Ethic clearance procedures and social constraints

Literature on ethics research regulations and procedures in qualitative research address both ideological matters and practical guidelines to varying degrees. For instance, Cannella and Lincoln (2011) discuss the diversity of ideological stances and highlight the importance of reflexive ethics at the outset. Here ideological positioning of self and researcher populations come to the fore and locate institutional governance structures within these relationships as both “interconnected and invasive” (p.85). Koulouriotis (2011) on research with non-native speakers of English in the Canadian context reviews researchers’ concerns, citing practical guidelines for

safeguarding researcher populations. These include using clear language or translations in the informed consent process as well as managing respectful researcher and participant relationships across the entire research process. Koulouriotis also points to governance structures as outside these face-to-face relationships, where institutional protection supersedes participants' rights to understand the research process, and concludes that, ultimately, researchers must rely on their own "ethical compass" (p.13).

Elsewhere, the growing body of literature dealing with ethics protocols acknowledge risks to human subjects in social science research, suggesting that risks are not as readily identifiable as experimental research in behavioural psychology or bio-medical research involving human subjects (Barbour, 2008). However, increasing clarity around the potential and magnitude of risk, the process of gaining informed consent, and assurances of privacy and confidentiality show awareness of issues at the social, psychological, economic, and legal levels (Braunschweiger & Goodman, 2007; "CITI Program," 2016). As concerns my study, this body of literature advises on the technical management of potential violations of privacy with observational data, social dynamics of focus groups, for barring assurances of confidentiality due to limits of the researcher to control the behaviour of group members, and procedures for snowball sampling involving research on sensitive topics.

Pursuing approval from the Ethics Committee at the teacher training college (TTC) to conduct the main study was my first experience of a situational constraint (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003), which opened my eyes to the formidable gatekeeping functions my workplace represents when identified as the research site of an exploratory study. This experience exemplifies claims that practical, ethical and political decisions guiding the research design are interrelated

(Barbour, 2008). It also reinforced a necessary spirit of opportunism for qualitative researchers whose research site and workplace are one and the same (Holliday, 2009). My experience brought compliance with institutional governance structures to the fore (See Appendix B: Reflections on Ethics Compliance). After a challenging period of organisational change and negotiations of ethics clearance, the main study commenced two years after the preliminary study (PS).

This experience shifted my awareness of ethics from a means of ongoing reflection on research issues bearing awareness of a researcher's responses to prior learning and future impacts (Mann, 2016) to ethical decisions made in response to institutional forms of regulation, where ethics regulations operate as an institutional form of contextually grounded governance practices (Cannella & Lincoln, 2011). As identified in chapter four, I see that my research endeavour reflects pragmatic concerns from my professional experiences at the college and my disciplinary training (Barbour, 2008) as an English language teaching (ELT) specialist. However, the TTC's Ethics Committee affirmed a linear view of the research investigation (Crotty, 1998) and set this as a basic requirement. Satisfying requirements for pre-given lines of questioning and procedural details for each phase of data collection was not only time consuming but also at odds with my research design based on an exploratory approach characterised by discovery and opportunism (Holliday, 2009). The frustration from encountering a delay resulted in ongoing self-analysis on how best to overcome the barrier to start the study.

In hindsight, I experienced an insular phase during which time I reconsidered the disciplinary and methodological issues presented by my proposed study as well as its analytical potential (Barbour, 2008). During a period of approximately one year, I developed guidelines,

which acknowledged institutional tensions arising from my proposal for an unfolding approach of deciding how to employ ethnographic methods in a step-by-step fashion. These included: 1) locating a carefully considered orientation to local culture and institutional context; 2) establishing appropriate researcher relations with respect to the researcher's role in the setting and within its research community; 3) providing a reflexive account of the research process; and 4) adapting a critical approach in respect of local sensitivities. These guidelines clarified my approach to reflexive ethics running through the research project. Writing these guidelines served as an important stage in establishing my researcher reflexivity by helping me understand the institutional parameters for accountability both at the TTC (See Appendix C: Ethics approvals - TTC), and the School of Education at Durham University (See Appendix D: Ethics approvals – Durham University).

5.2. Overview of methodological procedures and tools

My redesigned proposal subsequently featured three phases of data collection. Each phase featured the use of a different set of ethnographic tools for different purposes. To hone the research questions, I used focus group discussions first. Then I conducted participant observation with field notes and, after that, individual interviews. Each tool offered insights into different aspects of the phenomena of English use at the TTC and in the wider speech community. Each tool also reflected pragmatic decisions based on when and how I could realistically collect data while meeting all the professional obligations as a teacher at the TTC. As described in chapter three, a preliminary study (PS) conducted with guidance from a researcher at the TTC, preceded the main study and allowed trialing the use of focus groups. In the following sections, I discuss

each phase of data collection and the ways I used each tool in relation to the various ethical and procedural issues they posed.

Conceptual and methodological insights from the PS, as referenced in chapter three, have been incorporated into the research design alongside feedback from the TTC Ethics committee. As mentioned, findings included support for linguistic dualism (Findlow, 2006), where English and Arabic evoke different associations but suggested that discourse type and speaker identity inform conceptions of English. Other emergent themes, described as linguistic awareness, emergent classifications of English, apprehension around linguistic variation and hybridity, and fuzzy conceptions of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) appeared (van den Hoven, 2014b), and moved my inquiry away from a concern with varieties of English. I then decided to look at the participants' conceptions of English and their descriptions of using English in and around the English-medium college environment (research question 1). I also wanted to learn more about the social influences, which mediated how they thought about English the way they did (research question 2).

The PS also offered support for the use of focus groups. As raised in chapter three, I realised the value of focus groups for accessing a range of meanings that the participants generate. I also recognised limitations when leading with questions based on claims established in the literature. In addition, I was concerned about the lack of development of each topic due to the amount and quality of peer interaction. For this reason, I sought other tools, namely participant observations in the second phase and individual interviews in the third phase (Spradley, 1979, 1980). These tools addressed institutional expectations for a sound research design and my research questions in respect to my situatedness in the setting. I decided to feature

each tool sequentially in this order to maintain an unfolding approach to my research design (Punch, 2006) and, also, to accommodate my workplace scheduling.

Table 1: Phases of Data Collection

Phase	Tool	Data collected
1. June 2012	Focus group discussions (FG) with 12 participants	4 transcripts (3.5 hours of interview data)
2. Sept 2012 - June 2013	Participant observations with participants from the Year 4 cohort	66 field notes
3. June 2013	Individual interviews (II) with six focus group participants and four new participants	10 transcripts (9 hours of interview data)

As outlined in Table 1, the first phase of data collection featured four focus group discussions. Each discussion ranged from 34 minutes to an hour and 15 minutes. This phase of data collection generated about three and a half hours of interview data. There were 12 participants who had concluded their third year of a four year degree programme. At that time in June, they were registered as Year 4 students for the following September. I used a semi-structured interview schedule with questions modified from the PS in respect to my reading of the conceptual and theoretical issues, as flagged in chapters two to four. I arranged the focus group prompts in a semi-structured format with three lines of inquiry: descriptions, explanations

and elaborations. My orientation to the data collection in this phase was to seek a broad range of perspectives and to note which topics generated tensions within the group. I explain this phase of data collection in more detail in section 5.3.

The second phase of participant observations occurred during the academic year from September to June. In total, I took 66 fieldnotes of observed conversational activity in various accessible venues mainly at the college, although a handful occurred in semi-private settings off-campus where the participants conducted teaching internships. The main purpose of the observations was to increase my sensitivity to linguistic practices occurring at the TTC since I reasoned my observations of conversational activity in English and Arabic could enrich my questioning about the use of English in the final phase of individual interviewing. My focus was mainly on interactions among the Year 4 cohort and those who appeared as their interactants (e.g. teachers and other members of the TTC community). Due to ethical concerns with privacy and confidentiality, I limited my records to notations of topic, number of interactants, and language choices. I explain this phase of data collection in more detail in section 5.4.

The third and final phase featured 10 in-depth individual interviews. This phase included six of the women from the focus group discussions the previous June and four new participants. With the six returning participants, I used a semi-structured interview schedule, designed to review and expand upon themes generated in the earlier focus group discussions. This phase of inquiry served as a form of member checking (Barbour, 2008) and provided opportunities for the participants to elaborate on salient issues or experiences. For reasons related to sampling decisions, I led with the same line of questioning from the focus group discussions with the new participants, but allowed these participants greater flexibility to move onto new topics as they

emerged. My orientation to the data in this phase was depth and sought elaborations of individual perspectives. I felt this would be achievable due to a sustained focus on particular topics developed by individual participants. Each interview lasted between 50 minutes to 75 minutes. The 10 interviews generated almost 9 hours of interview data in total. I explain the third phase of data collection in more detail in section 5.5.

In total, 16 women were interviewed in groups or individually across the span of one calendar year and I gathered over 12 hours of interview data. As mentioned in chapter one, the participants reflect a particular constellation of student body, marked by gender, generation, tribe and national vision. The participants in the main study were all Emirati females. Although citizens, many came from families known as Saudi, Omani or Yemeni in origin, which are known to be conservative and value gender segregation highly. Most women were single but two were recently married. They were between the ages of 20-30, and lived in family homes in Abu Dhabi suburbs commuting daily to and from the campus. At this stage of their education, the participants had completed their third year using EMI at the college. Before enrolling at the TTC, all students had graduated from local government schools, where they studied English as a subject to learn. Although a handful of males studied at the college, this particular cohort was entirely female. In these ways, the participants constituted a homogeneous group of Emirati women who had encountered heterogeneous designations of English in education, including as a subject to study and as a medium of instruction. Sampling considerations are outlined in greater detail in the following sections.

Now I turn my attention to the treatment and analysis of the transcripts. Although I intended to transcribe the focus group discussions before the commencement of participant

observations, the process of transcribing the focus group data overlapped with the participant observations. As soon as my priorities for transcription became clear, I sought an assistant to prepare the transcripts. I then edited the transcripts carefully to check for accuracy. I used a manual coding process (Barbour, 2008) which occurred in several phases. After I completed the focus group transcripts, I summarised the highlights in detail and prepared a summary. I followed a similar procedure with the individual interview transcripts. Transcribing, coding and analysing took roughly two years, in part because I integrated each phase of data collection with analysis and writing for publication (van den Hoven, 2014a, 2014b; van den Hoven & Carroll, 2017). As a result of the labour-intensive cycle of data collection, analysis and public dissemination, I gained deep familiarity with the themes in the data and their relationships to the literature base.

5.3. The first phase

This section describes the first phase of data collection. I address the use of focus groups as a valuable ethnographic tool for use with Gulf Arab students. Then I document the procedures taken when conducting the first phase of data collection using focus groups. I expand on sampling and recruiting decisions and briefly describe the semi-structured interview format and question topics and types. The purpose of the first phase of data collection was to seek diverse accounts of English use and a range of meanings that English generated in this setting. I was also interested to learn which topics aroused tensions in the group. As such, focus groups are well-suited for these purposes (Barbour, 2008; Krueger & Casey, 2014).

5.3.1.1. *Focus groups with Gulf Arabs*

In this section, I describe focus groups primarily in terms of their merits with Gulf Arabs. Focus group interviews and discussions are recognised as the more appropriate method for ethnographic research in education (Wilson, 1997), concerning lifestyle choices in intercultural settings (Shah, 2004) with under-explored and hard-to-reach female populations (Madriz, 2003). They are also recommended, in particular, for Gulf Arabs and Emirati women (Thomas, 2008; Winslow et al., 2002) because they align with culturally familiar patterns of discussion as seen with *majlis* formats, where visitors may put forward topics for discussion in a public living room setting. For this reason, I trialed a focus group discussion in the PS and chose to start with this tool albeit with modifications responding to the linguistic and cultural dynamics of the TTC setting.

As a research tool, focus group discussions gather qualitative data via an informal discussion with selected participants on a particular topic chosen by the interviewer (Wilkinson, 2004). The use of this tool, alongside observations, characterises an ethnographic approach (Morgan, 1997). Although Morgan refers to the term, focus groups, for any group interview format, there are recommendations to distinguish discussion formats according to the degree of control over the sequencing and pacing of questions given to the participants (Thomas, 2008).

As mentioned in chapter three, I used the term “focus groups” as shorthand for the kind of group interview used but I used “focus group discussions” with the participants to signal distance from my teacher roles. However, I had less experience with hosting a scheduled speech event (Spradley, 1979) as a researcher, moderator and observer. These roles required juggling

three new skills simultaneously: 1) promoting a fluid conversation among the participants in English; 2) observing how the participants interacted with each other and with me in English, and 3) mentally noting if they chose Arabic for particular functions. The following sections address several practical considerations I heeded for effective management in this Arabian Gulf context.

5.3.1.2. Group composition: gender and identity

Regarding the composition of focus groups with Gulf Arab members, there is a particular emphasis on the gender and identity of the researcher and informants. To this end, it is deemed “essential and appropriate” (Winslow et al., 2002) that when the groups are composed of Emirati females only, the researcher is female. Although Clarke (2005) has claimed successful use of focus group interviews with female Emirati pre-service teachers, he did so without comment on gender dynamics. Winslow et al. (2002), on the basis of a health care study with Emirati females, strongly advise that a non-Emirati female is “preferable, as these women had great concerns about confidentiality” (p. 571), particularly with exposing family secrets. Furthermore, they recommend a non-Emirati bilingual female with Arabic as a first language, who is skilled at establishing trust and rapport and facilitating a group discussion among uneducated Emirati women. Thomas (2008) adds that an outsider brings an air of confidentiality on the basis that an outsider rarely has access to spreading family secrets among the local community. He also takes issue with clear-cut notions of in-group and out-group designations, describing them as potentially “unjustified ...[and] judgemental” (p. 85), arguing that the key ingredient is trust.

5.3.1.3. Issues of linguistic reflexivity and linguistic resources

These discussions of the cultural and linguistic status of the researcher prompt qualifications of my status as a TTC insider and non-Arabic speaking outsider and the focus of my study. First, in contrast to Winslow et al. (2002), the topic of English use is less private and sensitive than personal or family health matters. Secondly, the participants are neither uneducated nor monolingual. Rather they are educated and literate in two languages. Thirdly, the focus on the linguistic status of the researcher as the sole arbiter of communication negates insight arising from productive tensions between diverse speakers in educational settings. As suggested by Kramsch (2011), educational settings feature unstable and malleable power differentials. Emanating out of recognition of the third space of the language learning environments (Kramsch, 1993), Holliday (2009) advises that the researcher and participants engage with a “multiplicity of meaning-making modes” (p. 16) suggesting at once the place for a form of linguistic reflexivity.

According to Holmes, Fay, Andrews, and Attia (2013), reflexivity is the shared domain of researcher and research participants, and touches on the quality of communicative exchanges where multilingual processes and heterogeneous forms of language are at play. These processes spoke to my experiences with how the participants used English and Arabic at the TTC and how they might employ it in interview contexts. To this end, I needed a research concept of linguistic reflexivity to discuss the value and limitations of using English and some Arabic in the focus group setting. It has the potential to address how I, as a researcher and moderator, can access meanings when I lead with English as the research language but where Arabic may arise as a preferred language for certain interactions. As such, I carried an emergent awareness of linguistic

reflexivity forward as a concept capable of recognising that linguistic issues could manifest throughout the data collection and analysis processes and lend insights into my research study.

Phipps (2013) offers an account of “linguistic incompetence” (p. 332), which reflects macro dimensions of access to language learning opportunities. Given my memories of earlier rebuke from former supervisors for interviewing non-native speakers in English, her account afforded some insights into tensions borne from proposing to research in English in a bilingual speech environment. Even though my skills in Arabic are poor and my students are not native speakers of English, my experiences at the TTC suggested that a pragmatic response was to credit the linguistic resources available to myself and the participants. I regard that our collective linguistic skills serve as communicative resources, hewn through daily practices managing barriers in English-medium classroom contexts. These skills also support the achievement of empathetic discussions. Linguistic reflexivity, as a research concept, opens a space to talk about the management of intercultural communication amongst research interactants with different linguistic profiles and the research opportunities that are possible. For instance, as suggested by Holstein and Gubrium (2011), renewed interest in “what is being accomplished, under what conditions, and out of what resources” (p. 342) is an avenue for future research. Similarly, Thomas (2008) credits trust based on familiarity, rapport, and offers “breathing space” (p. 87) with non-Emirati moderators as the basis of productive communication. Breathing space then emerges as a tacit reflexive response researchers in this context can use when managing communication across two languages, such as English and Arabic.

5.3.1.4. *Group composition: size and location*

Regarding the number of participants in focus groups, Winslow et al. (2002) state that the optimal size of groups is four to five members. Their rationale credits the oral tradition in *majlis* settings, where larger groups of women can talk at the same time and hold side conversations, but may deprioritise the researcher's questions. In addition, Thomas (2008) recommends letting members select other members, such as friends or family members, in order to facilitate trust and warm interaction among members. The benefits of a smaller friendship group size accords with my professional experiences where larger groups of ten or more students form sub-groups and hold side conversations, necessitating stricter management of turn taking on my part. Smaller friendship circles also reduced ethical concerns where I could assume trust amongst peers would ensure a respectful orientation to private and sensitive discussions should they arise. In addition, smaller groups eased problems with transcription.

A further consideration is the choice of physical setting. As suggested by Thomas (2008), the location should replicate conditions where heartfelt conversations normally occur, but for Emirati women in the Gulf context, this means a gender segregated speech environment and not just a pleasant space. As a female researcher, I recognised a responsibility to ensure the discussion spaces restricted male interruptions. Simple measures, such as a note on the door and blacked out windows, proved sufficient in regulating male access in the PS. This strategy prevented a male colleague from walking into the room unannounced. In this sense, I argue that considerations over group composition in the Gulf require an awareness of the need to restrict male access if focus group participants and the researcher are women.

5.3.1.5. Issues of criticality and self-censorship

Regarding the content of group questioning, Thomas (2008) suggests avoiding topics seeking criticality in general and makes a specific reference to verbal confrontation of esteemed leaders. Winslow et al. (2002) claims that reluctance to criticise leadership in her study was due to the low level of education of her participants; however, as supported by Austin, Chapman, Farah, Wilson, and Ridge (2014), criticality is also disavowed by UAE-based academics. Because top-down decision-making processes tend to be favoured in UAE HEIs, expatriate academics connect criticality with threats to job security, particularly when directed at HEI management practices in the form of being “public with their suggestions for improvement” (p. 552). Such input in the UAE academic environment potentially operates as a perceived form of “cultural contamination” (Davidson, 2005, p. 262). In addition to caveats surrounding criticality, Thomas (2008) suggests researchers reconsider Western bias of “groupthink” (p. 86) and accept discussions oriented to achieving consensus versus individual opinions. For reasons of my participants’ and my own comfort, I avoided direct questions of social critique and paid attention to how the participants developed the discussion.

5.3.1.6. Sampling decisions

My population sample is a group of Emirati female students at the TTC, who are framed by dynamic processes of urbanization, social development, (Bristol-Rhys, 2010) and educational reform. As students I meet at the TTC are mainly Emirati women and outnumber Emirati males, my choice to focus on Emirati females is pragmatic. However, as the meanings attached to English and professional training at the TTC can be quite different for women, I recognise that

they are positioned as agents of change towards new international standards of English proficiency, yet have socially conservative norms of gender segregation in respect to Emirati males, and sometimes, male teachers and researchers. I also recognise that students who are attracted to the college tend to belong to off-island neighbourhoods with particular tribal associations. In these ways, the participants in my study constitute a particular constellation of student body, marked by gender, generation, tribe and national vision.

In line with the use of purposeful sampling in qualitative research designs, there are many meaningful ways to group participants by shared experience or attributes, such as gender, age and social class (Barbour, 2008). For instance, Clarke (2008) used year of degree programme and campus location for his research with Emirati pre-service teachers. As a suitable means of capturing a diverse range of perspectives I proposed the following categories in the TTC Ethics resubmission: a) married women with children; b) high-performing students; c) low-performing students. These categories reflected needs for purposeful sampling, which I subsequently revised out of pragmatic considerations. Firstly, information on academic performance is not only sensitive and private but also inaccessible; secondly, married students with children refused being too busy with family priorities; and thirdly, first-hand experiences with assigning TTC students randomly into groups had resulted into class protests, attributable to interpersonal conflicts as well as familial or tribal tensions.

Since students cohered in friendship groups delineated by “class sections” (i.e. 401, 402, 403, 404), I revised my sampling plan in favour of the pre-cast category of class sections. Class sections refer to groups of 20-25 students from the same incoming year group, or cohort, who share a daily schedule of courses. The criteria for section composition are undisclosed yet

teachers characterise sections by academic performance and motivation. Sections better accounted for naturally-occurring social groups emerging from shared routines than did categories of academic achievement and marital status. Creating a safe environment was necessary for participants to voice a range of opinions and also disagree with each other. I heeded Barbour's (2008) recommendation of "peer group constructions" (p. 136) for the familiarity and comfort this arrangement provided participants, a condition underpinning a need for accessing multiple and diverse perspectives of English.

The plan also entailed recruiting three female students to coordinate their discussion groups for me. I personally recruited one student from each section, with whom I felt a sense of rapport. I first explained my aims to each recruiter individually before requesting their assistance in further recruiting three more students each from within their networks. I recognised that this sampling strategy was sensitive to time pressures I faced. It also afforded the recruiter leadership opportunities in managing group communications, accommodating refusals and setting group size. However, this recruiting strategy is no longer purposeful sampling as it has elements of convenience and snowball sampling by prioritising the participants' agency in nominating members (Barbour, 2008; Krueger & Casey, 2014). The recruiters' networks enabled a richer exposure to diverse students and ensured the groups comprised of members they trusted with sensitive information. However, as identified, married women were not included, which suggested the value of conducting second-stage sampling (Barbour, 2008) to seek perspectives of women who have children in the third phase of individual interviews.

5.3.1.7. Focus group interview guide

I redeveloped the focus group interview guide from the PS in light of careful reading of themes in the UAE literature base, my conceptual and theoretical interests, and feedback from the TTC Ethics Committee. The revised focus group template featured three main headings: descriptions, explanations, and elaborations. Underneath each heading I listed all potential question prompts to clarify my analytical focus (See Appendix E: Focus Group Template). The probes addressed the following topics: languages experienced daily; conversational activity in English in various domains; conceptions of English and EMI; comparisons of English to Arabic; and influences from other community members and the media.

The first section targeted descriptions of linguistic practices with open questions about languages experienced on a daily basis in the UAE. After reading a description of the study aloud and completing procedures related to informed consent, I began with questions which drew out descriptions anchored in daily practices, thus responding to recommendations to focus on lived experiences for helping participants build on them in subsequent phases of the discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2014). More forthrightly, Spradley (1979), advises: “don’t ask for meaning, ask for use” (p. 97). Spradley (1980), in explaining the importance of seeking an overview of the phenomenon and its associated parts, suggests using “grand tour” (p. 63) questions as well as expressions of interest and “cultural ignorance” (p. 62) as effective ethnographic questions. He claims that these kinds of questions put the participants in teaching roles about their tacit understandings of social reality. Accordingly, I structured my questions about general language use in this fashion, then moved to English and Arabic use in various social domains, such as at

school, in public, and at home, before narrowing to the specific zones associated with English-medium instruction, such as in the classroom and other domains at the TTC.

The second and third sections of my interview template featured probes about the names, meanings and rationales for using English. The second phase bridged “here and now” experiences at the college and allowed participants to provide extended commentaries on various topics, such as the place of English in the UAE, comparisons of English use and Arabic use, and desired changes to linguistic experiences at the TTC. Mindful of caveats around criticality, I elicited descriptions of social influences they encountered about English, which I called “disagreeable.” I asked about input from older and young family members, newspapers or social media. In the third phase, I paraphrased key points from the discussion to check my understandings of claims the participants’ made about English use. I then asked if I had missed anything before closing the discussion and thanking the participants. Since my research questions did not explicitly target gendered or intercultural experiences of communication, I did not ask direct questions about these dynamics but followed up on these themes if the participants offered them for discussion.

5.3.1.8. Focus group scheduling

After gaining necessary permission to start the research, I scheduled four focus groups immediately. Three focus groups consisted of only three participants although one had four. Focus groups of this size have been called small or “mini-focus groups” (Krueger & Casey, 2014, p. 67). Twelve participants agreed to schedule a free hour after completion of their final assignments. Since approvals occurred in the last week of the academic year, the timing

eliminated concerns from the TTC Ethics Committee that participation in my research project would over-burden busy, full-time students. Although I originally proposed that each discussion would last 40 minutes, in actuality, two ran shorter and two were much longer. FG2 and 4 lasted roughly 34 minutes, but FG1 lasted 55 minutes and FG3 lasted 75 minutes. (See Table 2)

Reflections on each focus group suggested focal points for the next phase of participant observations.

Table 2: Focus Group Records

Focus group	Members	Date	File	Time
1.	NF (PS) AY (PS) AL (PS) EM	June 11	DS--098	55 min 51 sec
2.	EQ HD KH	June 14	DS--99	34 min 22 sec
3.	EM (FG1) AM GA	June 14	DS-100	75 min 8 sec
4.	HM SF FM	June 18	DS-101	34 min 10 sec

5.4. The second phase

This section turns to the use of participant observations and the collection of ethnographic data via written fieldnotes. I first describe how I used Spradley's advice on collecting ethnographic data at the TTC. Then I identify some ethical considerations which influenced where and how I collected field notes.

5.4.1. Participant observations

According to Spradley (1980), ethnographic field work is central to understanding another way of seeing the world and participant observations enable gaining ethnographic data in a particular social setting. My interest lay in seeing how the TTC campus functioned as an English-medium environment, and where and how, in fact, the students used English. As a result, I chose observational fieldwork for gaining insight on what the participants actually do in practice versus what they say they do (Barbour, 2008). For Barbour (2008) participant observations are a form of "hanging about" (p. 93), which allows insights into the pace and tenor of communication and complements interviewing and analysis. Bristol-Rhys (2010), also a female teacher of female Emirati students, recommends participant observations for capitalising on privileged employment access.

Although fieldwork does not produce statements, which verify what students think (Barbour, 2008), I chose participant observations to heighten my sensitivity to the diverse ways TTC students used English beyond the classroom environment and, also, to note choices of language use when among the diverse range of people working and studying at the TTC. In addition, I recognised that observational data could potentially inform lines of questioning for

subsequent interviews and contribute to building a “taxonomy” (Spradley, 1980, p. 112) of patterns of English use at TTC. When surveying the broader campus setting in this way, I understood that boundaries of accessibility and permissibility (Spradley, 1980) would influence productive sessions of observations.

5.4.2. Scheduling participant observations

Accordingly, I used ethnographic field notes to track the quantity and quality of English use in various spaces of the TTC campus. I scheduled a year of participant observations to sensitise myself to how these social processes were “enacted on a daily basis” (Barbour, 2008, p. 17). I also wanted to alert myself to blind spots from my own habitual interactions with the participants in these spaces, which Spradley (1980) calls “selective inattention” (p. 55). I allotted the duration of the academic year because of the irregular schedule of fourth year students and my own professional responsibilities at the TTC. In that academic year, Year 4 students had a semester of coursework on campus followed by three weeks on-campus for research training and two months of off-campus internships. These contextual factors suggested unpredictable ebbs and flows of observable conversational activity.

To gain rich data, I first identified zones supporting English use among Year 4 students. When in a zone of conversational activity, I focussed on interactions between these students and their interactants. I was concerned with groupings of people, movement in and out of the observed space, choice of language, and communicative purpose. A focus of this kind addresses Spradley’s (1980) matrix of place, actor and activities and it also aligns with interest in the frequency and intensity of routine verbal exchanges (Berger & Luckmann, 1971). As such, my

notes identified Year 4 students' engagement with different kinds of people at TTC and particular kinds of linguistic exchanges, such as greetings, requests, and private conversations.

Observational data of this kind helps to identify the students' mother tongues, the languages administrators use, the languages overheard in the environment and the native language of the teachers, which Van Leeuwen (2004) identifies as important for schematising language use in multilingual universities.

Spradley's (1980) guidance on the conduct of participant observations encouraged me to learn by doing. Firstly, he discusses how to shift from being an ordinary participant to a participant observer. Such a shift entails engaging appropriately in the setting and keenly observing others as well as my own actions. He explains that alternating from insider and outsider positionings is a matter of introspection in ways that recalls Mann's (2016) iterations of reflexivity. I also recognised that noting ways the participants and I switched languages in the setting could yield analytical potential for researching multilingually and reflexivity (Holmes et al., 2013). In addition, I also noted that varied degrees of access and non-productive opportunities for observation could be bound to unclear and shifting tensions as a college insider and non-Arabic speaking outsider.

5.4.3. Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations of how and where to observe influenced my decisions about the kind of data I collected. For instance, I did not use photographic data, unlike recommendations for their value in educational institutions (Blommaert et al., 2010; Holliday, 2009). Photographic images of Emirati women are strictly prohibited in the UAE, necessitating the use of written field

notes. Secondly, I did not ask colleagues for permission to observe linguistic behaviours because of disruptions posed to the teaching and learning focus at hand, and my concerns that my presence would set a stage for linguistic performances. I was aware that my status as an English language teacher, when sitting in class to observe would alter interactional patterns. Given recognition that the presence of a researcher impacts how people act (Blommaert et al., 2010), my concern was that this vantage would also cast me as an evaluator of language use or teaching style and disrupt my own professional relationships in the setting. In addition, I was aware that open use of Arabic in English-medium classrooms is taboo, and with particular reference to my bilingual, Arabic-speaking colleagues, I understood that documenting linguistic practices of Arabic-speaking bilingual teachers taught could be a source of anxiety and threat to job security (Carroll & van den Hoven, 2017).

Additionally, my previous interactions with non-teaching Emirati and expatriate staff made me feel uncomfortable loitering in the administrative wing without a work-related purpose. Thus, I visited administrative zones with a task to complete, and, in fact, carried out only a handful of fruitless observations there. In sum, for ethical reasons pertaining to the participants, my colleagues and myself, I refrained from seeking approval to observe inside classrooms and prioritised observations with field notes written in zones of the college. These pragmatic decisions reflect some of the ethical dimensions of conducting participant observations at the TTC.

5.4.4. Quality of written fieldnotes

I conducted the second phase of ethnographic fieldwork the following September. This phase of data collection featured 66 handwritten field notes of participant observations. My written fieldnotes documented linguistic acts and patterns of conversational activities occurring in various spaces at the college. Most field notes were hastily written in pencil on white sheets of A4 paper. I designed my own observation template to record date, time and place of the observation, as well as the number and groupings of participants. (See Appendix F: Observation Template). This template allowed for rudimentary sketches of the floor plan and movements into and out of the observed space, including my own location in the space, as well as descriptive notes about the kinds of conversational activities I observed.

My premium on sustained opportunities for observation and note-taking, however, conflicted with normal social behaviours as a faculty member at the TTC. Instead of sustained sessions of note-taking, I engaged in expected workplace interactions, such as greetings, and small talk. In terms of Spradley's (1980) five scales classifying participation in the setting from high-low, my level of engagement was "moderate" (p. 58). This level of involvement allowed me to balance my TTC role with my researcher role while respecting social cues when my presence was unwelcome. As anticipated, opportunities to interact varied by session. My notes carry my subjective interpretations of my shifting place in the social setting.

Notes written during observations were informal with snippets of overheard phrases, which ascertain the topic and the purpose of the interaction. Among these, two were incomplete records and a handful featured illegible words. Notes composed immediately after observation

are more reflective and easier to read (See Appendix G: Fieldnote Example) They began with a statement describing my entrance in the scene and include comments and initial theorising. I stored all notes as isolated entries in a paper folder in a locked room. Later, when time permitted, I created an observation record document, transferring all hand-written notes into a Microsoft Word file, which I used instead of a fieldwork journal (Barbour, 2008; Spradley, 1980). I used my experiences observing linguistic practices, including an unexpected use of Korean, as well as those I did not, such as minimal interaction with males, as prompts for new questions about these practices. In addition, the phase of typing out the field notes into the observation record document allowed reflection on questions for the next phase of individual interviews (See Appendix H: Observation Records).

In sum, my focus during this phase of participant observations rested on describing who the participants used English with, where, when, why and how. My notes documented topics of conversation, where possible, and some contextual details about the quality of the interaction. If I were an interactant, my notes reported my contributions to the conversational activity. If I were an observer, I mainly wrote about what I saw Year 4 students do and the general topic and social function of the conversation I heard. In some field notes, I included examples of overheard phrases to help me record if the language was English or mixed with Arabic. I mainly observed in areas outside instructional settings at the college and, wherever possible, used work-based tasks as opportunities for observations in certain areas. When asked about my note-taking, I described my research purposes and answered questions asked so as to avoid covert and suspicious behaviour. I also endeavoured to mitigate appearing as a potential disruption or threat to colleagues. In these ways, I respected workplace norms concerning permissibility and

accessibility and managed the ethical dimensions of conducting participant observations in my workplace.

5.5. The third phase

This section turns to the third phase of data, which was in-depth, individual ethnographic interviews with 10 participants the following June. This section explains the general focus of the interviews and then addresses sampling decisions, interview procedures and the data collected.

5.5.1. *Ethnographic interviews*

According to Spradley (1979), ethnographic interviewing is “one strategy for getting people to talk about what they know” (p. 9) but for Barbour (2008) this is a dynamic social process, described as an “in-depth exchange between researcher and researched” (p.113). This process entails the researcher asking planned, open-ended questions about the topic of interest and listening actively to individual responses. In contrast to focus groups, such interviews allow participants to speak at length and develop in-depth responses. In contrast to my focus of seeking a broad range of viewpoints with focus groups, in the third phase I sought in-depth, individual accounts of English use. I also sought descriptions as well as explanations of how the participants, as future EMTs, contended with English as a linguistic change and managed changing expectations of societal bilingualism. In short, I wondered how they described how they used English and also made sense of the place of English in this stage of their lives.

5.5.2. *Protocol with returning participants*

Of the 10 individual interviews, six participants from the focus groups agreed to a follow-up interview with at least one member per original group, as shown in Table 3. With these returning members, I asked for greater in-depth commentary on selected topics. I used a semi-structured interview guide with these individuals (See Appendix I: Individual Interview Template (Returning Students) and drew on the sequence of topics raised in the focus groups. This allowed an opportunity to establish credibility, or verisimilitude, by conducting member-checks (Harklau, 2011; Holliday, 2009). After the introduction, I started with question prompts, such as “Last time I noticed that you made some interesting comments about the languages you experienced in your daily life here in Abu Dhabi.”

Table 3: Individual Interview Records

Order	Participant	Returning (2 FG #) or new (1 reason)	File	Time
1.	HD	2 (FG2)	DS-002	49 min 0 sec
2.	SR	1 (married)	DS-004	47 min 40 sec
3.	EQ	2 (FG2)	DS-005 + memo	24 min 52 sec + 31min 09 sec
4.	KH	2 (FG2)	DS-003 + DS-006	16 min 29 sec + 43 min 10 sec
5.	AY	2 (FG1)	DS-007	59 min 26 sec
6.	FS	1 (Al Gharbiya)	DS-009	57 min 0 sec

7.	EM	2 (FG1 & FG3; Al Gharbiya)	DS-010	75 min 14 sec
8.	FH	1 (avid reader)	DS-011	55 min 0 sec
9.	HM	2 (FG4)	DS-012+ DS-013	4 min 55 sec +64 min 0 sec
10.	MM	1 (married)	DS-014	93 min

While interviewing, I aimed to be responsive to developing and expanding the topics in fresh ways. To signal openness to building on information from topics mentioned before, and in developing new but related topics, I asked questions like: “Regarding what you said about ..., did I get that right?” and “Do you have any other comments about...?” In advance of each interview, I prepared notes about topics from each focus group, including topics prompted by insights from the participant observations. For instance, I also sought greater detail of the particular places and ways they used English inside the classroom and other zones at the college and explanations of distinct ways they used English, Arabic other languages on campus. Other topics built on content the participants raised in the interviews, such as the sense they made of knowing two languages, the role of bilingual teachers in elementary school, and salient experiences learning in English across the four or five years at the TTC.

5.5.3. Secondary sampling and interview protocol

I also recruited four new participants via opportunistic interactions at the college in order to include other perspectives on English use. As a form of “second-stage sampling” (Barbour, 2008, p. 213), two new participants were young married women with children, one self-identified as an active reader, and one was relatively new to the urban conditions of the capital

city, having been raised in a small village in the under-developed Western region of the emirate, *al Gharbia*. As Year 4 students, they shared similar routines at the college but represented a different set of interests and experiences from the original sample. With the new participants, I used a similar sequencing of questions about English use as in the focus group schedule. In so doing, I asked for an overview of everyday language use in Abu Dhabi before moving onto questions about their personal experiences using EMI at the TTC. Subsequently, I asked questions to develop their unique perspectives as married women, readers or small-town-girl-turned Abu Dhabi resident.

5.5.4. Data collected

The interviews lasted from 50 to 90 minutes and the ten interviews generated over 10 hours of transcribed individual interview data. Most individual interviews took place in my college office, where there were minimal disruptions but also a sense of professional formality. In sum, the individual interviews offered opportunities to discuss particular experiences, salient social influences and rationales shaping understandings of English. They also offered insights into individual responses to adapting the languages they knew for particular purposes or reasons. The data from the 10 individual interviews was then ready for transcription.

5.6. Data analysis

This section shifts focus to explain the particular decisions made in reference to analysing two data sets: four transcripts of focus group data and ten interview transcripts. My “conceptual journey” (Barbour, 2008, p. 195) developed from reading about the potential of thematic analysis when conducted with rigour (Barbour, 2008). To this end, I used a deductive and inductive

approach informed by thematic analysis with explanations of how to code data into themes (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Support also came from reading about procedures of analysing cultural themes (Spradley, 1980) and explanations about the importance of audit trails to document the development of my thinking through various phases of data collection and analysis (King & Horrocks, 2010).

5.6.1. Overview of phases of data analysis

My analytical process had four recursive and overlapping stages, which occurred over two years. First, I began with active listening and transcribing of the various audiofiles. Secondly, I started an inductive and deductive manual coding process which I revisited across various phases. This process began with multiple annotated readings of the transcriptions and ended with a summary code cover sheet for each individual focus group transcripts and a composite summary sheet of the four focus groups. Thirdly, I reviewed codes and generated themes through various mind-mapping processes. I trialed various diagrams with the focus group data, which assisted with initial theorising concerning where and how the participants reported using English and other languages.

Because I wanted to see the data as a whole and interact with it physically, I transformed the colour codes from the transcripts into coloured sticky notes, which I arranged into a large wall mosaic based on the mind-mapping diagrams. Fourthly, I also wrote up and disseminated emergent themes via publications and presentations. This process documented the development of theorising after various phases of data collection (i.e. the PS, the first phase of focus groups and the 10 interviews). In this way, my process of multiple readings of the transcripts helped me

to hone codes and generate themes (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006) and engage actively with the data. The following sections describe my engagement with the data in greater detail.

5.6.1.1. Active listening and transcription

Having conducted all discussions and interviews myself, my first phase of analysis began with editing and reviewing the transcriptions of the audio recordings. Drawing on my experiences in the PS, I recruited an assistant to prepare draft transcriptions. Using Express Scribe, a transcription software, I then purposefully checked each transcription for accuracy in terms of what the participants said and how the transcriptions accorded with a system of notations I adapted from readings of Conversation Analysis (Mazeland, 2006; Samra-Fredericks, 1997). My concern lay with the words they participants used and how the participants used language to communicate meaning. I originally considered length of pauses and changes in tone of voice as limited in value for my analytical focus. I also added line numberings to allow me to locate extracts systematically. (See Appendix J: Transcription Codes)

While checking transcriptions, new questions arose regarding systematic notations for length of pauses, environmental sounds, and the incursion of Arabic words into English sentences. Some noises from the setting, such as opening and closing doors, and ringing phones, had a bearing on the talk that ensued and so I notated environmental sounds using rounded brackets. Regarding Arabic words, I opted for English alphabet letters to approximate Arabic sounds (Awde & Samano, 2006), and not numbers, which is a convention used in chat messages for particular vowel sounds (Daoudi, 2011). I used letters because they were easy to type and the

Arabic utterances often flowed in English sentences and so it allowed me to read these words from left to right, as per English directionality. Arabic words used tended to be emphatic and were limited to words or phrases, such as *yani* (you know) and *bismillah* (in the name of Allah). I did not provide English translations in the transcriptions, since with these words I did not need them. Although I noticed grammatical errors, I did not edit utterances for grammar or syntax in an attempt to preserve the speaking style of each participant since verbatim transcriptions also revealed details about the linguistic resources used.

As explained earlier, the groundwork of learning how to transcribe began with the PS. Later, after hiring an assistant, I used the process of checking the quality of full verbatim transcriptions and correcting them as a form of analysis. By listening carefully to what each participant said and how they said it as well as what the participants said in response to others, I gained increasing familiarity with the data and insights emerged from this process. I also developed a sense of how to identify which participant held the floor and how fellow group members back channeled, modified claims or shifted the focus of the talk. I also learned how to technically deal with overlapping talk and interruptions. I consider this phase of checking the transcription to be essential in taking stock of the data collected since it allowed me theoretical insights into which statements signposted socially complex and confusing perspectives and helped me recognise the location of particular statements and stances within the data sets.

5.6.1.2. Inductive and deductive codes

One important feature of the analysis process entailed contending with the wide array of topics and positions raised in each successive phase of data collection. I planned a provisional

coding frame developed from labels in the literature on the use of English in higher education. I anticipated that functional labels for English which mark its place in educational domains, such as English as a medium of instruction (EMI), English as a second language (ESL), English as a foreign language (EFL) would appear and serve as ready-made deductive codes. In addition, in the PS, my conceptual interest concerned national varieties of English (e.g. British English). However, I noted that the participants in the focus groups did not readily provide these labels to describe their understandings of the social value of English. Rather than describing English as a homogenous conceptual entity, I noted several participants in different groups citing experiences of linguistic variation and used this frame to discuss daily experiences with English.

My focus then began to pivot around where, when, why and how the participants used English. I paid keen attention to references to kinds of conversational activity. In this sense, inductive codes grew around these nuanced linguistic practices. To clarify, when I asked about their experiences using English, many participants readily identified heterogeneous forms of English serving different purposes. I noted that some participants linked English language variation to salient face-to-face encounters either from past schooling or current social experience and relied on comparisons to Arabic, offering detailed explanations of the greater range of variation Arabic has. In the PS, I noted that the participants referred to notions of “register” and “speaker identity” (van den Hoven, 2014b), which I regarded as inductive codes even though these conceptions also appear in the substantive literature base. I brought this complexity forward to the ten individual interviews and sought clarity on how register and speaker identity played out in these participants’ accounts.

5.6.1.3. Manual coding

The next phase entailed reading the entire set of focus group transcripts in one setting and coding manually. I trialed a “Classic Approach” (Krueger & Casey, 2014, p. 118) since manual coding is recommended for first timers because it is a prevalent technique, which is systematic, visual and rigorous (Krueger & Casey, 2014). Furthermore, this way of working hands-on matched my disposition (Barbour, 2008). With highlighters and transcripts in hand, I began by coding one transcript at a time and sought a range of labels for English in order to address the first research question. I first drew on “semantic relationships” (Spradley, 1979, p. 107), such as English is “an access tool to the knowledge” (AY, FG1, 403) and categorised references to English as a functional tool. During a sustained process of reading and rereading the focus group transcripts, I also highlighted all salient items with descriptive labels and attendant issues. I also wrote comments in the margins for review later.

5.6.1.4. Cover sheets

I then reread the highlighted extracts and comments in the margin and promptly wrote a cover page for each focus group discussion. The cover sheets contained factual information, such as time and date of the discussion, and participants (identified by random letters). It also contained a list of codes contained within the four transcripts, with corresponding items accorded by line number. To ensure the participants’ anonymity, I used random letters to identify the participants (e.g. EQ) and MV to refer to myself. I also included a record of the focus group number (e.g. FG1-4), and, subsequently, an individual interview number (e.g. II 1-10). As

explained by King and Horrocks (2010), this kind of record keeping supports quoting verbatim, and is one way of supporting a systematic trail of interpretation.

5.6.1.5. Composite sheet

After making four cover sheets, I made a composite cover sheet merging all the codes into one document, paying careful attention to carry over the appropriate line numbers and letters. In this way, I expanded within-case codes with across-case codes (King & Horrocks, 2010). To exemplify, the code, “English as an access tool” first appeared in FG1, and I later enriched it with an item from FG3: “It’s like a key for going out of the UAE (p) to know things around your – not from – not in UAE. You have to be learning English first” (AM, FG3, 923-4). King and Horrocks (2010) call this process descriptive coding since codes stay close to the data and uses labels reflecting words and phrases uttered by the participants. One complication I noticed in this phase of descriptive coding is that codes overlap and flow freely into others. For instance, in the code above, participant AM specifies that English is an access tool to knowledge, and qualifies that this kind of knowledge is from th the world out there, and not knowledge produced in the UAE, which suggests additional codes pertaining to “sources of knowledge”.

5.6.2. Descriptive codes and categories

As a way of making sense of the range of descriptive codes, I then identified six basic categories according to repeated patterns I noticed across the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I began with the focus group data and saw this as a way of filtering the data into meaningful units in response to my research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I also used colour codes to help me see the information I had. They include: “names for English or Arabic” (pink); “domains of

use” (orange); “forms of English” (green); “purposes of using English” (yellow); and, “reasons, rationales, justifications and issues” (blue). In terms of the Berger and Luckmann (1971) treatise, as described in chapter four, most categories reflected pre-theoretical knowledge but the latter involved interpretive schemes. These categories continued to be a meaningful way of actively reading and annotating the transcripts through all the focus group data and so I applied them to the individual interviews.

5.6.3. Codes for initial theorising

However, because the in-depth interviews offered richer one on one engagement between myself and the interviewee, I added a further category, which I called “reflexivity and emergent interpretive schemes” (purple). This label reflects underlying rationales I detected in my own theoretical analyses, which Barbour (2008) calls “embryonic theorizing” (p. 192). In this category, I included striking statements, which triggered theoretical insights related to the people, processes and outcomes involved. Some examples included instances when the participants cast teachers as in-group or out-group members; references to ways the participants positioned themselves in relation to each language, such as a) bilinguals who needed support, b) agents of language maintenance, or c) agents of language shift. Other examples include insights pertaining to my own linguistic reflexivity, such as the influence I played in offering linguistic terminology to the participants or ways I accommodated and repeated their ways of using English. I discuss these as reflexive insights in chapter eight.

5.6.3.1. Theme Generation

After coding the focus group data in this way, I then gravitated to a mind-mapping phase, where I put the codes into a visual shape on the page. Spradley (1980) describes themes as a unit of cultural meaning and recommends using schematic diagrams to generate themes for looking at the parts in terms of the whole. Accordingly, I began my schematising by mind-mapping on a large sheet of paper. At first, I wrote English in the middle with labels and associated issues deriving from it but this way failed to integrate complementary issues shared with Arabic. Then I tried a vertical list with Arabic on the top and English at the bottom with notations for English and Arabic varieties in the middle areas. However, both arrangements were unproductive because they did not seem to show the subtle relationships I noticed were emerging between English and Arabic.

Triggered by a participants' restatement that English is "a way of communicating" (HD, FG2, 232-233), I then wrote Arabic in the middle left and English next to it on the right. From there, I looked for a way to integrate the various codes by mapping out "ways of communicating". I laid out the green codes for "forms of English and Arabic" that the participants mentioned. I then overlaid the orange codes pertaining to "domains of conversational activity" to specify the kinds of places where the participants used each way of communicating. This way of mind-mapping allowed me to see that "ways of communicating" were also "patterns of daily conversation", and this insight showed how the parts integrated.

To illustrate further, by mapping out other ways of communicating on a horizontal line, a unifying picture of conversational activity and domain of use emerged. From there I mapped

other features of language use, such as purposes for using English and the issues raised, which allowed me to see multiple perspectives emerging from the numerous ways the participants described talking to people in English. From this overview, I saw more clearly that the use of EMI was one way of using English among many. However, I also noticed that Arabic also had a greater number of ways of communicating, and, furthermore, that ways of communicating in Arabic also included English, particularly when related directly or indirectly to teaching and learning interactions. I also noticed that each way of communicating suggested different issues and opportunities. Through this process, ways of communicating in English at the TTC showed greater complexification (Trudgill, 2009). I then continued by enriching each code with data from the 10 individual interviews as a means of generating greater depth and detail.

After I amassed all the data from the individual interviews, I returned to the mind-map and proceeded to expand its scale and adjust its format. I manually transferred each item into a summary note, written on a sticky note of the corresponding code colour. I physically arranged the orange sticky notes, with labels for English, to the lower section of a wall. I built the wall into a mosaic of codes, which helped me to see the data as a whole and the salience of the parts. In other words, I saw the kinds of labels, practices and issues linked to each way of using English and Arabic. A final layer included the purple notes with reflexive and critical insights into underlying interpretive schemes. Living with the data before me enhanced my analytic process.

In heeding Barbour's (2008) suggestions to be sensitive to the gradations of meaning in the participants' accounts and pay keen attention to "the fascinating grey areas" (p. 29) in the data, I saw that it was possible to schematise individual experiences into "a typology of ways of communicating", which identified the range of linguistic behaviours that the participants took on.

It also allowed me to see the ways that each language was conceptualised as a homogeneous entity which accommodated the heterogeneous experiences using it. In so doing, a picture of the group's linguistic repertoires emerged, which made sense of how they reported using two languages in various multilingual social spaces they engaged with.

5.6.4. Building theoretical relationships

At this stage, I began drawing theoretical relationships to the conceptual models described in chapter four. I revisited Pakir's (1991) model of expanding triangles of English expression. I examined its triangular clines of linguistic variation. I appreciated its references to contextual practices to show English language variation, such as level of English proficiency and degree of formality. I noticed that her model addresses social tensions generated by high and low varieties, where expectations of a national standard used in formal settings clashes with an informal colloquial variety that accommodates a greater amount of word borrowing. Pakir's model indicated important parallels where an educated variety of English is detected as well as another variety for informal settings. Her model recognises shifts in register as a knowledge base and a skill set informing a "uniquely defined English-knowing bilingualism" (Pakir, 2004, p. 117). From her model, I noticed that my participants described similar tendencies in reference to their Abu Dhabi based experiences.

I then reverted to Mahboob's (2014) model of language variation. It suggested mapping English language variation according to the user's readings of the social context, namely the domain of activity, types of user, and purpose of interaction. His model also underscores that language forms change as a result of perceptions of English users, and the kinds of social

purposes English serves, and, furthermore, meshed with my observations at the college and the participants' accounts. I discovered that various social spaces at the TTC were germane to English use while others favoured Arabic. I also learned that the participants mixed English and Arabic in systematic ways in particular zones at the TTC and for particular purposes. I then began viewing spaces within the college as “zones of conversational activity”. These reflections triggered my thinking about particular linguistic practices at the college when English functions as a medium of instruction and when it does not.

Summary of methodological procedures

In summary, this chapter identified a range of methodological decisions taken in response to the various literature bases and my situatedness in the setting. I first identified a number of pragmatic considerations taken in respect to the research setting. I also reported on ethical considerations, tools and procedures across three phases of data collection. In section 5.3, I described the first phase of data collection using focus groups and highlighted the special interest this tool has for researchers working with Arabian Gulf participants. I also addressed issues pertaining to linguistic reflexivity and criticality for their bearing on managing communication in focus group settings. In section 5.4, I addressed the use of participant observations as a second phase of data collection and highlighted ethical considerations regulating where and how to conduct ethnographic fieldwork. In section 5.5, I described the use of in-depth interviews as a third and final phase of data collection. Finally, in section 5.6, I described in detail my procedures for data analysis, including how I generated inductive and deductive codes and themes.

The next chapter turns to the first of two findings chapters. Each findings chapter includes a discussion of the findings. In both chapters six and seven, I highlight findings which answer the two research questions in an integrated way. In the next chapter, I share findings about how the participants described using English in respect to social group dynamics on a daily basis. This approach provides a range of labels for the manifestations of English in daily life with a focus on how the participants described using language they knew at the TTC as a particular linguistic ecology. I integrate descriptions of language use with the kinds of social influences involved in each pattern reported. In the second findings chapter, I also use a frame of social group dynamics but widen the scope to membership in an Abu Dhabi speech community, which I see as a broader linguistic ecology. Accordingly, chapter six refers to linguistic repertoires but chapter seven refers to linguistic awareness.

CHAPTER SIX

6. LINGUISTIC REPERTOIRES

This chapter is the first of two findings chapters. Based on the 16 participants' accounts from the focus groups (FG) and individual interviews (II) of daily language use, this chapter provides an overview of the multiple ways that the participants report using Arabic and English for social and academic purposes. It responds to the first and second research questions by sharing findings about the distinct ways the participants responded to the use of English as a medium of instruction at a TTC in Abu Dhabi. To do so, I contextualise their accounts of using English at the TTC within overall linguistic repertoires to show that, according to the participants, Arabic dominates ways of communicating in daily life but English occupies a privileged place in particular domains at the TTC. By gaining broader insights into patterns of conversational activity, I share findings pertaining to the names and labels the participants offered for each pattern of conversational activity (research question 1) and social relationships to particular types of interactants (research question 2). As such, my findings integrate answers to the two research questions by discussing conceptions of English and social influences for each manifestation of language use. To do this, I refer to as “language mode” and “linguistic repertoires”

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6.1. Language Mode

This section shares detailed findings pertaining to the participants' descriptions of English and Arabic use during a particular phase of educational reform in Abu Dhabi.

Description of how English is used, with whom, and under what conditions responds to “the classic sociolinguistics question” (Levine, 2011, p. 85), and contributes to a dearth of descriptive accounts of the “current sociolinguistic landscape” (Matsuda, 2012, p. 4) relevant for language for teacher education and for awareness of the functions English serves in in the Arabian Gulf (Charise, 2007). To this end, Grosjean’s (2001) construct of “language mode [... as] the state of activation of the bilingual’s languages and language processing mechanisms at a given point in time,” (p. 3) proved helpful in interpreting the participants’ conceptions of Arabic and English, which differed in tone and quality from those reported in the literature from the United Arab Emirates (UAE). For instance, because English is viewed as “new and foreign and culturally ‘different’ [... and Arabic as] losing its place of power and prestige” (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011, pp. 13-14), it was confusing, at first, to make sense of HD’s insistence that English is a “way of communication” (FG2, 232-233) and EQ’s emphatic restatement that “[t]here are many types of communicating” (FG2, 258).

Furthermore, NF’s explanations that she can “shift between Arabic and English” (FG1, 164) suggested that she implicated both languages in dealing with the English-medium environment at the college. AL’s ensuing comment conveyed that when among classmates at the college, shifting from English to Arabic is possible but “you need time to shift if you - you’re gonna ask about the course in Arabic you [... and] - they need time to shift – like to process your - what you are saying.” (FG1, 122-124). AL, who remarked that the mental processes affected her when speaking, also acknowledged that the same happened to her fellow interactants. In addition, FS, who self-identified as a bilingual, suggested that mixing the two languages is an outcome of her English-medium education, when stating that “Arabic and English they come

together sometimes” (II6, 183-6). Such statements throughout the FG and II data sets warranted closer attention for situating English as a variable and dynamic social practice in an Arabic-speaking context, which requires speakers to process language choices and respond in discrete ways. However, her statements also suggested that I also pay close attention to decisions the participants made in respect to when to use Arabic or English. This seemed particularly important since my participants often referred to themselves as bilinguals, but recognised that their fellow interactants had differing linguistic profiles.

As concerns language choices among bilinguals, Grosjean (2001) suggests that language behaviours are not only informed by domains of use but also by the monolingual, bilingual or multilingual status of the other interactants. He refers to base language to signal how bilinguals orient to language choice. In my study, the participants suggested they had two base languages to choose from: Arabic and English. Their iterations of ways of using English, Arabic, and mixing the two base languages indicated that they interpreted their interactants’ linguistic profile when choosing to orient to English or Arabic. In so doing, it appeared they made further sensitive decisions on how to vary each language to suit implicit communicative purposes. For instance, EM reported suppressing English vocabulary when in company of older Emirati women. By keeping her vocabulary free of English words, she could make the older women feel welcomed and respected, as explained below:

If [...] we are sitting together, the old moms – ah - with – ah - old ladies so (p) it is, im - in my opinion, impolite to talk in English because (p) if I know the meaning of that word, maybe they don’t know the meaning of that word. So why we have - why I have to talk in

English? So I have to delete this word and keep it away (*EM laughs*) and use Arabic word. (II7, 658-763)

In addition to choosing ways to speak which include her interactants, EM also reported she also could do the same to exclude interactants. In the extract below, EM explained by switching to Arabic in class, she and her classmates could exclude the teacher: “Sometimes we speak in Arabic, (*EM starts laughing*) if you want - if we don’t want the teacher (*EM laughs*) to know what we say - know what you are saying (II7, 229-230). In these ways, EM credited her capacity to switch between English and Arabic as pragmatic responses for the given social dynamics. These descriptions matched the adaptations that EM and other participants reported.

A further suggestion that the word, “mode”, would enable sense-making of the participants’ reference to “ways of communicating” is that there are several references to “new modes” in the various literature bases, albeit muted and unclearly defined. For instance, Troudi and Jendli (2011) uses “new mode” (p. 39) to orient to EMI purposes in the UAE, but Findlow (2006) references “dual modes of consciousness” (p. 20) to suggest two distinct ways of thinking and being in the world. Furthermore, within the broader literature base examining the phenomena of lingua francas, interculturality, and linguistic complexity, Risager (2016) offers that these conditions give rise to a new “mode of verbal communication” (p. 38). In these ways, mode captures subtleties around language choice, shifts in form, and a range of uses.

Accordingly, I use “language mode” as a pliable concept which recognises the linguistic responses bilinguals make when discerning which base language to use and how, according to determinations of the linguistic profiles of fellow interactants in a wide range of social settings. Although scholarship on language mode is somewhat criticised for loosely specifying the extent

to which other languages are activated or suppressed (Dijkstra & Van Hell, 2003), I use the concept to suggest the decisions the participants made when determining how to use and modify English in an English-medium environment where using Arabic is also an option. In this sense, the wider Arabic speech community remains in focus.

While ways of using English and Arabic in the higher education (HE) environment can be distinguished from its broader social use in Abu Dhabi, the broader context also enables interpreting EMI as a particular set of language modes nested within dynamic linguistic repertoires. Consequently, this chapter builds towards descriptions of Arabic, English and other languages, identified as part of the Abu Dhabi speech community in the next chapter. This chapter rests with the ways languages are incorporated into linguistic practices with a particular focus on teaching and learning interactions responding to the use of EMI at TTC.

From initial analyses of the focus group data, I detected a range of references to distinct patterns of conversational activity in English and Arabic. These emergent patterns accounted for different practices in various domains of use (e.g. hospitals, shopping malls and the college), and other contextual details, namely interactants and purposes. Framing the data into patterns of conversational activity led to an original identification of eight modes: “Standard Arabic, Local Arabic, Local Arabic-English, TTC-flavour English, Arabish, Functional English, Academic English and Simplified English” (van den Hoven, 2014a, p. 49). These eight modes reflected patterns of conversational activity, reported from analysis of the FG data set, which showed decisions made according to choice of language, ways each language should be modified in respect to contextual features, such as interactants and communicative purposes.

As described in chapter five, iterative processes, which included rereading the conceptual and theoretical literature base in tandem with the transcripts, suggested arranging the modes on a continuum from Arabic on the left to English on the right. In this arrangement, two modes stood out as exemplars of academic proficiency in HE, namely “Standard Arabic” and “Academic English”. Also, two modes addressed the ways of using English at the college, that being “Academic English” and “Simplified English”. I noted that the participants used degrees of formality when distinguishing “Local Arabic” as their mother tongue variety of Arabic from Standard Arabic, a formal language for important written communication in the college. Similarly, they used degrees of formality as well as linguistic complexity to explain that Academic English pertained to their use as learners at the college whereas Simplified English reflected their way of communicating as pre-service teachers with children. In addition, Local Arabic and English were amenable to various, distinct patterns of linguistic variation.

As mentioned, on the basis of the four focus groups, I had originally reported eight modes. Subsequently, with the inclusion of the II data in this study, I detected four additional patterns, offering a richer and more complex picture of practices of linguistic hybridity and their direct and indirect relationships to the use of EMI at the TTC. This thesis then presents 12 modes, which are grounded in the participants’ accounts. I understood these patterns as reflective of the ebbs and flows of movement, much like traffic at a busy intersection, where patterns of activity are neither constant nor fixed but fluid and dynamic. Of the 12 modes, in total, eight use Arabic as the base language, grouped as follows: 1) Standard Arabic, 2) Local Arabic, 3) Local Arabic - Other Varieties of Arabic, 4) Local Arabic - Broken Arabic, 5) Local Arabic – English, 6) ‘Arabish’(or ‘Arabezi),’ and 7) Local Arabic with Korean words, and, 8) TTC-flavour

English. A further four modes use English as the base language. They include: 1) Simple English, 2) Learner English, 3) Academic English, and, 4) Simplified English.

In this chapter, I proceed by first providing an overview of each of the eight modes of Arabic followed by the four English modes in the next section. My rationale for this seeming detour is premised on my understanding that Arabic is the main linguistic resource which shapes understandings of the value of English in the participants' linguistic repertoires. It is thus necessary to delineate the dominance of Arabic in order to better understand conceptions of English and the social influences shaping conceptions. In this way, it becomes possible to describe perspectives of the size and shape of EMI (Dearden, 2014) in my research setting.

6.2. Arabic Modes

In this section, I use labels from the participants' accounts to exemplify Arabic patterns of conversational activity with extracts that highlight a range of teaching and learning exchanges. I do this in order to illustrate the ways Emirati pre-service teachers accommodate the linguistic profiles of their interactants. As stated above, the Arabic modes are: 1) Standard Arabic, 2) Local Arabic, 3) Local Arabic with English modes, 4) Local Arabic with Broken Arabic, 5) Local Arabic with other varieties of Arabic, 6) Local Arabic with Broken Korean, 7) "Arabish," and, 8) TTC-Flavour English. For each kind of conversational activity, or mode, I rely on the participants' accounts to identify types of interactants encountered, linguistic features used as well as discuss insights related to their descriptions of teaching and learning interactions. As follows, I do the same with the four English modes in the subsequent section. In this way, I address the first and second research questions by contextualising conceptions of English and the

kinds of social influences by these patterns of using Arabic. In this sense, I contextualise the place of English by acknowledging the dominant place of Arabic in overall linguistic repertoires, and, ultimately, show that conceptions of Arabic mediate conceptions of English.

6.2.1. Standard Arabic

When interacting with speakers of other varieties of Arabic, the participants referenced a standard variety of Arabic. This variety held prestige as a lingua franca for the participants. EQ referred to a formal variety of Arabic, which is used “to communicate with Arab people” (FG2, 35) since, as KH put it, “we are Arabic people” (FG2, 35). This variety of Arabic is known as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), but the participants did not use this label. Instead they used a range of synonyms for this variety, including Standard Arabic, Formal Arabic, Classic Arabic and Classical Arabic (KH, II4, 50), as well as “the Quran language ... [and] Classic Quran” (EQ, II3, 390, 586). The prevalence of the label, Standard Arabic, in the preliminary study (PS) and the main study suggested that this label resonated for many participants as a meaningful descriptor for this mode of conversational activity.

Of note, the participants offered no distinction between Classical Arabic and MSA. Some participants also used various labels in the same passage. For instance, FH used the labels of “Arabic”, “Standard Arabic” and “Formal Arabic” when describing the kind of Arabic featured in Arabic class at the college, as shown in the following extract: “And, suddenly, he said, ‘Okay. Speak in Arabic!’ We speak in Formal Arabic and, you know, he said, ‘Oh, no, don’t talk this way.’ We mean - when I talk in Arabic, they laugh at me. Because I’m bad in – in, you know, at Standard Arabic.” (II8, 658-660)

The participants mainly accessed Standard Arabic in public domains where it was used to transmit information for official purposes. They recognised that a formal variety of Arabic is the appropriate choice for formal written communication between institutional bodies, when the interactants may not know each other personally, and when a one-way flow of information is expected. They reported encountering this kind of Arabic when receiving official communications from government ministries (FG3, 151-5), and the college. Other practices include reading newspapers, poetry, and the Quran. Although EQ confessed to not liking reading very much, she sometimes read newspapers, and identified that “Khaleej, Etihad [are written in] Classic Arabic” (II3, 469).

Standard Arabic is also featured in visual media showcasing the spoken language. FS reported that she listened to Standard Arabic via three of the four television channels offered by the Middle East Broadcasting Center for programming for Arabian Gulf audiences. This variety earned adjectives of formal, classic, and good. For instance, in recalling fond childhood memories of watching cartoons on television, which were dubbed into Standard Arabic in the home (II6, 263-3), FS stated her disappointment with the quality of cartoons today since “they don’t speak in good Arabic” (II6, 369-70).

Standard Arabic is not widely practiced in everyday spoken communication. Although it is present in the home via television and other media, it is pointedly not used for face-to-face communication there. Despite first encountering this variety of Arabic in schooling, particularly when information is presented to them, several participants also acknowledged barriers to learning it properly in this context. They suggested that Standard Arabic was limited to Arabic class, but elsewhere it is mixed with the spoken dialect she described as Local Arabic.

In terms of individual reading habits in Arabic, none of the participants reported leisure reading habits in Arabic, a finding which contrasts with prior research I conducted on leisure reading habits among pre-service teachers (van den Hoven, Westera, & El Bassiouney, 2014). Of the 16 participants only three raised the topic of reading habits. AL referenced studying Arabic grammar to be able to read the Quran better, EQ reported reading but not liking to read, and FH reported not benefiting from reading in Arabic and preferring reading in English instead. As such, there was no indication of robust reading habits in Standard Arabic.

Expectations to read, write and speak in Standard Arabic, however, generated emotive responses in many participants. During teaching internships at local schools (also called practicum), several participants acknowledged that, as bilingual, pre-service English-medium teachers (EMTs), they faced repeated requests for Arabic translation by non-Arabic speaking EMTs. The findings illustrate the prominence of Standard Arabic as the main medium of communication with parents in government schools. The participants reported that non-Emirati mothers of children under their supervision preferred parent-teacher communication in Standard Arabic. As KH attested, “Not all the parents are Emirati. Some of them, like Egyptians, Syrian, they cannot [...] understand Emirati language so the Arabic Classic is like more formal.” (II4, 111-112) From these encounters, KH and other participants, recognised that Standard Arabic was a lingua franca, and that proficiency in Standard Arabic was a necessary professional skill. In addressing my question about what the college could do better, HD tentatively offered that “Maybe, if the college added – ah - Arabic and Islamic studies so we can balance these two languages.” (III, 576-7). HD’s suggestion puts some onus on the TTC to redesign coursework in Arabic language and culture that would support her in becoming a balanced bilingual.

Although many participants confessed lacking an appropriate ability in Standard Arabic, not all shared interest in college-based instruction in Arabic and Islamic studies. Several participants revealed a weak commitment to study MSA for academic purposes at the college. Such responses cohered around three stances: 1) disinterest due to the grammatical complexity of MSA; 2) disinterest because of domain loss of MSA; and 3) preferences to study privately with a Quranic teacher. In line with the first stance, HD excused her poor proficiency since this variety of Arabic was “REALLY different” (II9, 724) from the kind she spoke at home, emphasising that “it’s HARD and it’s difficult!” (II9, 730-1) Similarly, FS complained about the complexity of Arabic grammar, describing that “it’s very, very complicate [...] very complex” (II6, 268-9), so much so that learning correct grammar warranted three textbooks in high school.

KH, who ascribed her weakness in Standard Arabic to its perceived irrelevance in daily life, reflects a second stance. KH stated that while she was able to write in the past she has since forgotten how to write (II4, 129-34). Her stance points to domain loss, as indicated below:

Yeah, it’s not a foreign language. It’s like (p) forgettable language. (*KH laughs*) [...]

Yeah. Everyone forget about it. No one using and now they - some - some people like, they ask us to use it but we forget about it. We only use it in Arabic class with our Arabic teachers (II4, 339-341)

To exemplify, KH shared an anecdote of the one and only time she used Standard Arabic for face-to-face conversation to highlight its lack of utility in everyday communication, as shown below:

One time. In one of the shops in Saudi Arabia. One time! And when he talked to me, I want to laugh! I don't know why but I tried to calm myself and be still but - it's like - and he told me: 'You have to talk in Classic Arabic because it's our mother language'. And I – like (*KH laughs*) 'Okay. Okay.' But then we were surprised, me and my sister. 'Why should I talk in Classic Arabic? I don't know how to say it.' (II4, 327-331)

KH reported feeling awkward, and indicated she was affronted by the Saudi Arabian shopkeeper's expectations to demonstrate her fluency in Standard Arabic in that public setting. Her statement conveys that for herself and her sisters, Standard Arabic is "a socially marked language [... that feels] unnatural" (Levine, 2011, p. 140). Despite social pressure to speak this formal variety of Arabic to show her inclusion in a pan-Arab group, this variety of Arabic was not part of her linguistic practice. KH also indicated that Standard Arabic is socially marked for casual conversations among her friends in private settings at the college, as explained below:

Because even – if I – sit with my friends and when we talk in Classic Arabic we will laugh at each other because it's like something weird. It's different, strange, something we didn't used to it. (II4, 290-292)

Similarly, FH reported laughing in Arabic class at the college and also laughing at her peers when using Standard Arabic there. The following extract suggested that settings where Arabic is studied as a subject also gives rise to laughter: "Ah - you know, whenever I have Arabic class, we just (p) have - we laugh ALL the time. ALL the time, we laugh, we laugh, we laugh." (II8,

650-651) After probing for conditions giving rise to such laughter in Arabic class, FH provided two explanations: 1) her male teacher recited romantic poetry with drama and flair, which generated an awkward feeling among the young, female audience, and 2) the students did not take each other seriously as Standard Arabic speakers because of their non-standard pronunciation and grammar. FH emphasised that she was not only being laughed at since she too laughed at her peers, when stating, “Yeah, not only me, I laugh at them - all of them.” (II8, 665) FH and KH conveyed a lack of commitment among their peers to practice Standard Arabic in Arabic class and other parts of the college.

AL’s stance provides some important insights regarding personal accountability borne out of reverence for Standard Arabic and its religious significance. AL explained that her motivation is to read the Quran deeply and to recite it properly but, to do this, she required intensive private lessons with a specialist teacher to acquire the foundation of correct grammar rules and pronunciation. She confessed that she has either lost these skills or never learned them properly in school, as shown below:

And now I have – I have classes to study Quran and - ah - like reading of *al Quran*, reciting of *Quran*. And most of the - my – my first - ah - two month, my teacher taught me Arabic rules and Arabic - uh - correct [...] and correct Arabic pronunciation that I lost or maybe that I didn’t even have a chance to learn in school. We g - we went to very deep Arabic rules [...] and we studied them before we studied recitation (p) rules of *al Quran*.
(FG1, 429-34)

AL regarded learning Standard Arabic as a form of protecting it. AL also credited another government-led initiative, associated with an unnamed Emirati dignitary (presumably Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, ruler of Dubai and the Vice-President of the UAE) for leading “seven projects to save the Arabic language here in UAE” (FG1, 467). AL’s stance touched on reported fears concerning domain loss, evident in a discussion where AM exclaimed, “We HAVE to keep the Arabic language.” (FG3, 437), which EM backed up by saying, “So we HAVE TO KEEP – ah – or using - or we have to keep talking with Arab – with – ah - with our language. (p) And we have to put it as the FIRST language NOT the second language.” (FG3, 440-443). GA then concluded with “If we lose the Arabic language, that’s mean if - we will lose our IDENTITY, CULTURE, tradition. We lose all this.” (FG3, 444-446). In these ways, several participants underscored genuine fear raised by domain loss and affirmed the importance of personal agency in order to benefit from the cultural and tradition knowledge associated with Arabic. However, of all the participants, only AL identified a successful strategy of private tutoring which secured the use of Standard Arabic in her linguistic repertoire.

Despite concerns around proficiency in Standard Arabic, many participants reported warm associations to using Standard Arabic based on gaining profound understanding of requisite cultural and historical knowledge, as shown below:

AL: We don’t use the standard Arabic

AY: That’s why we need it, *yani* as it is, of course, it is a tool.

AL: So Arabic as important as English to pre-ceive our identity and capture

AY: identical to the religion

AL: and give these access to our heritage and historical knowledge about Prophet Mohammed and his - ah *shen-sahab* - his followers (FG1, 436-439)

In these ways, the participants' accounts show a sincere recognition of the value of knowing Standard Arabic as Emiratis. References to using Standard Arabic was limited to accessing information via listening or watching modalities, and occasionally reading. Nevertheless, through practicing these receptive skills, they benefit greatly from a feeling of inclusion into a larger world order. Many participants report a lack of proficiency in Arabic with only one participant honing her grammatical knowledge in order to gain new knowledge from reading texts in MSA (or Classical Arabic). Limited engagement in MSA courses at the TTC, discomfort practicing MSA among peers at the college, as well as disinterest in leisure reading and reading for academic purposes provide some insights into why Arabic as a medium of instruction is not a greater priority for the participants.

6.2.2. *Local Arabic*

Local Arabic emerged as a label for a spoken variety of Arabic which the participants reported using on a daily basis with other Emiratis at the college and in other public and private spheres. This way of speaking is distinguished from Standard Arabic for being “informal” (EM, FG3, 471). Despite references to “Emirati Arabic” (O’Neill, 2014, p. 1) in the literature, the participants used other labels, such as “the local accent” (SF, FG4, 47), which is also abbreviated to “Local” (GA, FG3, 171). The participants did not provide a common label for this variety, but I noticed the salience of the descriptor “local” in several participants’ accounts to signify in-

group usage among Emiratis. For instance, “Local” appears throughout the transcripts as an adjective and a noun for Emirati people. Hence, I trailed this usage in my interactions, suggesting that calling this mode Local Arabic was not only unproblematic but also meaningful.

However, other names given included the “Emirati accent” (EM, FG3, 42), “Emirati language” (KH, II4, 289) and “slang Emirati language” (AL, FG1, 37 & 55), as well as “*aameer*” which AM offered as the translation in Local Arabic (FG3, 164). This variety of Local Arabic is also affectionately called “our mother language” (EQ, FG2, 65) as it signifies the first language acquired among family members in the home. In this mode, SR reported, “We feel comfortable. Yeah. We say everything. We understand everything. We feel free to talk.” (II2, 346-347) Like SR, KH also claimed it is the language she feels most comfortable talking in but there are fixed purposes for Local Arabic. In her words, they are: “for talking with families like – ah – talking, (p) chatting at home, (*softly*) (p) anything but not – ah - learning something like teaching something.” (II4, 38-39)

Even though the medium of instruction is English at the college, the participants acknowledged that Local Arabic features prominently in this domain as the main language for communication with other Emiratis. As EM put it, “We use it more than English” (FG3, 471-2). The participants reported using Local Arabic with Emirati peers and staff employed in administration or management as well as non-Emirati college employees from the Arab region (EM, FG2, 65), such as Saudi Arabia and Sudan (HD, II1, 462). Although these speakers have other varieties of Arabic as their mother tongue, they have become familiarised with Local Arabic through residence and employment in the UAE. Accordingly, Local Arabic is prevalent at

the TTC for various social and administrative purposes but no participants argued that Local Arabic should be used as a medium of instruction at the college.

According to the participants, prime zones of conversational activity in Local Arabic settings outside classrooms include spaces where students congregate in small groups without teachers, namely hallways, the cafeteria, the elevator, and the student lounge. These reports matched my own participant observations of student-friendly zones where students gathered in dyads and triads. According to the participants, in these spaces, routine use of Local Arabic among peers is mainly non-academic topics, such as “personal and daily life issues” (SF, FG4, 59). As HD pointed out, “if something irrelevant (*sounding amused*), we will talk in Arabic.” (FG4, 54-5)

Of note, EM offered that the purpose of using Local Arabic shifts when inside the classroom. The extract below shows that when among non-Arabic speaking teachers in the college, EM views the use of Local Arabic as a secret code:

Like a code! (*EM laughs*) [...] Sometimes – uhm - the teacher pass the - the break-time.

So we say it – uh - for each other: ‘We want break’. But we say it in Eng – in Arabic.

‘We want break. It’s break-time. Break time! Say it: break time! Say it!’ (*EM laughs*) But we say that in Arabic, between each other. (II7, 229-237)

As explained, EM’s rationale for choosing Local Arabic in the classroom is based on its effective role in managing details of student life in this zone, which entails determining who can access the intended message.

The home domain is an important, protected zone of conversational activity in Local Arabic. Emirati women feature strongly in this domain as advocates of speaking in Local Arabic only. Gender-segregated spaces, such as the *majlis* for women-only celebratory gatherings where extended relatives and community members are hosted, features prominently as a locus of Local Arabic use. As noted previously, EM reported self-censoring when in company of older Emirati women by keeping her Local Arabic talk pure, which, to her, means free of English words (II7, 758-765). The extract below points to EM's recognition of the important primary socialisation processes which occur in the home domain and affect children's linguistic development:

we have to use in - at home, of course, we have to use Arabic language because even the – the young, ah - the young or the little brothers or sisters - they have to get the strong language. The first strong language to BUILD their language, ah - the first language then start learning the second language, to have a big or a strong basic. (II7 715-8)

As indicated above, EM's stances reflects the contributions of using Local Arabic in the home domain for children's language development.

Like EM, FS also recognised that Local Arabic should be used exclusively in the home domain, yet she contested this practice. In the passage below, FS explained that she often used Arabic and English at home but her relatives have reprimanded her for not keeping the conversation in Local Arabic-only: "Like when I'm talking about or discussing something and I start talking, sometimes I talk in English and they are like this, 'We know that', they tell me, 'We know that you know English but you have to speak in Arabic'." (II6, 183-6) FS, who struggled

with the “Arabic-only” rule, explained that sometimes words come to her more easily in English, as shown below:

But now, I feel that now I can't expla - express myself in some Arabic word. I couldn't find - because I don't know what happened, maybe because I use English more?

Sometimes, like- ah - I'm – I'm not good at expressing – expressin' herself, but when I use English, I think that – I feel that I express myself more than Arabic. (II6, 186-190)

EM and FS convey two different orientations towards expectations to use Local Arabic at home. EM's orientations to respect the social needs and linguistic skills of older women and young children, means regulating the use of English in their company, but FS, who values self-expression, wants to honour her newfound linguistic competencies in English. In contrast to EM, FS unintentionally offends relatives for using English alongside Local Arabic in the home domain.

In sum, the participants regarded Local Arabic as a well-practiced spoken variety of Arabic which is used among Emiratis in various domains, including at the college. Strong messages, carried by older Emirati women, shaped their expectations of using Local Arabic only in the home domain. At the college, the participants cited using Local Arabic among peers to discuss personal matters and with other Emiratis for administrative purposes. However, inside classrooms led by non-Arabic speaking teachers, the choice to use Local Arabic is based on regulating the classroom environment.

Despite the significant amount of communication happening in Local Arabic, the participants did not suggest that their mother tongue should be the medium of instruction, which

is a topic concerning *linguistic rights* (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1995). I offer several possible explanations for this stance. Firstly, the participants used Local Arabic for speaking only. Hence, Local Arabic is not associated with reading or writing. EQ pointed out that, in fact, there were no formal texts to read in Local Arabic as magazines, newspapers and supplemental textbooks are printed in Standard Arabic (II3, 474). Secondly, Emirati teachers are not employed at the college. While Emirati teachers appear in primary and secondary schooling, the participants encountered no Emirati academics in teaching positions, and thus, have no examples of the use of Local Arabic for teaching in HE.

A third reason touches on conflicted stances towards word borrowing and code-switching practices. The extract below points to AM's regard of Local Arabic as an impure language:

Because some people are coming from Iran, some people coming from Yemen, Oman, that's why they - they mixed. So they are trying to keep their own language but - ah - combined it with Arabic (*GA laughs*). That's why the Arabic is – ah - the poor language. (*GA laughs*) [...] Always they are trying to – um - talk in Arabic but they changed something in Arabic. (FG3, 142-146)

Linguistic influences from Hindi, Urdu, Farsi and Swahili are recognised in the media as impactful on Local Arabic (Razgova, 2014), but in AM's description, she conveyed that other varieties of Arabic are involved and that social processes of language change have negatively affected Local Arabic. Yet, subsequently, when describing interaction with Abu Dhabi residents, who are neither teachers nor workers, GA said proudly, that “we use Arabic and English” (FG3, 230). EM's ensuing comment that, “Yeah we mix Arabic and English. This is the new

language.” (FG3, 232-233) indicates that the participants not only view Local Arabic as dynamic and malleable but they are aware that they are complicit with processes of language shift via code-switching behaviours (Canagarajah, 1999). The extent which the participants experience Local Arabic as unmixed is unclear. Further investigation by Arabic-speaking researchers into patterns of Local Arabic use in various domains, including in the home domain is needed in order to verify which zones are protected zones of Local Arabic.

The sections which follow, however, address the ways in which the participants report hybridising Local Arabic with other linguistic influences.

6.2.3. Local Arabic with English words

The participants reported mixing Local Arabic with English words learned at college. As a hybridised mode of communication practiced with peers, the participants reported then practicing this way of talking in the home for specific purposes. When asked about the use of English at home, HD answered: “at home, not a lot. Not a lot” (II1, 658) and, similarly, EM replied, “LITTLE bit” (FG3, 481). Regarding use at home, three patterns emerged: 1) English was used for studying, often with sisters, who were also students in HE and of the same generation; 2) English vocabulary, acquired through studying at the college, was circulated at home and used with parents in discussion about college life; and, 3) the participants used English to tutor younger siblings or, if the participants were mothers, to teach their young children high-frequency vocabulary. Such accounts differ from a reported increase of English in the home due to the influence of maids and nannies (Troudi & Jendli, 2011). My findings show that the participants acknowledged the influence they themselves played by injecting English words into

Local Arabic talk in the home domain. Reports of this linguistic behaviour lend some scope to investigate further the ways in macro-acquisition processes, such as learning English, learning in English in HE, and teaching in English support processes of language shift (Brutt-Griffler, 2002) in the UAE.

The participants described practices of code-switching in the home domain as stretches of sentences in Local Arabic talk with English words added (SH & FM, FG4, 118). According to EM, the ratio is “between fifty words - or between fifteen words - in Arabic, just two words or one words in English” (FG3, 481-483). From the various accounts, systematic patterns of word borrowing appeared based on the lexical categories of education, technology, medicine, as well as “simple” (FM, FG4, 102) emphatic expressions, such as “give me a break” (FM, FG4, 107), “my God” (KH, II4, 314) and “okay” (AM, FG3, 49).

To elaborate, several participants reported incorporating English vocabulary into Local Arabic talk at home to talk with different family members about daily life, but in slightly different ways. The extract below shows HD’s explanation of code-switching with minor variations of the amount of English used with her sisters as compared to her mother:

I use English sometimes – ah - if I am talking about my projects with my sisters. I don’t say, ‘I have a project’ in Arabic. I say ‘project’ or ‘assignment’. She know what I am talking about. I say to my mother, ‘No, I have ‘test’ tomorrow’. ‘Test.’ I say ‘test’. She knows that I have (p) test tomorrow, but I don’t say the ‘test’ in Arabic, I say it in English. (II1, 65-68)

HD stated that she discussed her college work with her sisters, but when talking with her mother, she described college life. She exemplified with the English word, “test.” Her account conveys that her mother understood from context the meaning of “test”. However, it is unclear if her mother used these words back. Similarly, FH described mixing her Arabic with English words from the college at home with her sister, a fellow TTC student, but, when talking with her brothers, she exemplified using content vocabulary pertaining to health-care (II8, 694-9). In the extract below, FH first modelled how she hybridised Local Arabic at the sentence level and then translated for me in English to show how she accomplished her word-borrowing strategies:

I say some words in English. I didn't re - stay this all sentence. I say, in Arabic, then I pick [...] one word, without thinking. I just spit the word. [...] I say in Arabic, I would say – ah ‘*en-a-al-hatel-hospital-ah-baden-doctor-gadi*.’ Like this. When I went to the hospital, the doctor said to me. Like this. (II8, 701-704)

In this explanation, FH provided a typical sentence structured with Local Arabic grammar and common nouns in English related to health care.

Several similar accounts of mixing Local Arabic and English words intra-sententially affirms this pattern when among siblings of the same generation. However, this linguistic practice received varying levels of encouragement from mothers and fathers. In the following extract, AM explained to her peers that she has introduced many college-related words to her mother, such as “meeting” and “college.” Consequently, AM’s mother used these individual words to check in on her daughter’s day at the college:

Some of them - they used to use some language. For example, my mother now she understand that 'meeting' means – 'mee' - ah, '*ichtimah*' in Arabic. So yeah - she said, 'You have MEETING' - 'meeting' in English. She said 'COLLEGE'. She [...] can use these words. She said, 'OKAY'. Yeah! She's familiar NOW with some words that we are always using it at home. (FG3, 83-87)

GA affirmed this practice also occurred at her home and added the word "project" to exemplify. Like AM, EM explained that her father accepted English words in Local Arabic talk in their home. He would even repeat English words to learn each word's meaning. However, EM's mother countered her father and limited the use of English in daily talk in her presence, as indicated in the extract below:

Ah – no-no – they (p) they - they didn't use it! My – my father like to use English - like to learn English, and if he heard any words in English, he got it and ask for the meaning of that and sometimes he use it. And – and my mom said, 'Why you say it in English? Say it in Arabic' (*EM laughs*). (II7, 421-4)

EM interpreted her mother's response as curtailing her husband's enthusiasm for English and, in so doing, protecting the home as a zone for Local Arabic. In the extract below, she translated her mother's admonitions to EM's father from Arabic to English in order to allow me to grasp its significance:

But mom, my mom – ah - they got the meaning but they didn't say the word. They got the meaning and if we say it – if we use it in our talking or conversation, they get the meaning but they didn't use it. [...] Because sometimes he used – ah - a new words for

her (p) and she didn't listen that word from me or from my sister, ~~{name}~~. [...] 'Say it Arab. Say it in Arab. Why you say it in English? You want to under - you want to be understand, or what? Say it in Arabic.' (*EM laughs*) She said that. (II7, 429-435)

EM then explained that her parent's different responses to mixing Local Arabic with English stemmed from her father's higher level of education and his greater levels of engagement with non-Emirati residents of Abu Dhabi outside the house than her illiterate mother.

NF and AL, who are sisters studying at TTC, reported gathering at home with their two other college-aged sisters for scheduled speaking practice in English. AL described this activity as "15 minutes to speak in English for - ah - to practice IELTS." (FG1, 115-120) This linguistic practice reflects consolidation of learning, where the IELTS examination is the focus of the General English courses at the college as well as a shared phenomenon for her sisters at another HE institution. Although conversational activity supporting the mock speaking practice is not likely conducted in English only but in Local Arabic with English words, English is the main language used with siblings of the same generation for a measured period of time, similar to the speaking component of the high-stakes test. This practice illustrates a necessary focus on improving academic literacy in English, mandated by the use of EMI across Abu Dhabi higher education institutions (HEIs).

In contrast to her peers, FS reported using English more often at home and for different purposes, namely tutoring her younger siblings. FS practiced teaching in English, which she perceived as addressing the cognitive challenges her young brother and sister faced with the New School curriculum (NSC) at their government school. FS described her willingness to act as

after-school tutor to her younger siblings in detail. Her behaviours exemplify her role as a “surrogate teacher” (Levine, 2011, p. 113), a phenomenon reflecting an asymmetrical relationship between two learners where the stronger learner provides substantial assistance, including corrective feedback, to the weaker learner. Because her 6th grade brother struggled with his homework due to cognitive challenges, FS reported that not only was patience and a strict attitude required, but also she necessarily switched from English and Arabic in ways she described as “English - bilingual like.” (II6, 72) Such engagement led to the use of the two languages, as explained below:

Sometimes I do her projects like sitting with them on what they need, what do they - what do they have to do for their project. They need to tell me first in English. Then I will do it, because they need to do it in English and in Arabic. (II6, 44-7)

Her tutoring efforts occurred in English and Arabic. She used two languages with her siblings to review assignments, assist with projects and even complete tasks for them.

Another way FS differed from her peers was in her overt enthusiasm for using Local Arabic and English at home. She indicated that her choice of language was primarily topic-based: “when we discuss about some problems that [...] my brother or my sister have, we talk in Arabic. When we discuss about their project, we talk in English.” (II6, 86-8) FS explained that her enthusiasm for using English originated in her past. Several years ago, as a village girl living in the desert area in the Western region of the Abu Dhabi emirate, FS lived three hours drive from the capital city. At that time, she was extremely shy and inhibited – even afraid to talk with her siblings. However, with her family’s move to the outskirts of Abu Dhabi in her second last

year of high school, she blossomed into a confident, aspiring EMT. FS credited two inspiring English teachers, one from Ruwais (a small city in the Western region) and one from Abu Dhabi, for building her confidence and enthusiasm to speak in English even though she struggled with words. Subsequently, teachers in her Foundation and EMI courses at the college alongside her father's daily encouragement helped transform her into an enthusiastic pre-service teacher, who enjoyed practicing her new linguistic and pedagogical skills at home (II6, 20-21).

EQ's home language experiences also differ from other participants. EQ, who was raised in Abu Dhabi, heard English used as a lingua franca between her Filipina mother and Emirati father in her early years. Her father, however, urged his children to spend time with extended family members to acquire Local Arabic. Soon thereafter, her mother also acquired enough Local Arabic to support its regular use in the home. Since that time, as EQ explained, they gave up English for "our accent, Emirati accent" (II3, 32) at home. Yet despite the early introduction of English via her parents, she has taken the role of teaching Education-related vocabulary acquired at college to her mother and siblings, as revealed below:

They know already what does it mean: 'project'. They ask me before, *yani*, for the first time when they hear that, what does it - 'project' they know already because - ah - you know, have sister and brother in the school so they know the word, 'project'. Ah - like 'assignment' - ah - 'cover page', my mother ask me, 'What does it mean?' I say, 'This one include project, something to be included' like this. Uhm - What else, 'rubric', 'What does it mean'? I say, 'Rubric is for the grade, how they are grading for you the project'. So, my mother - because I'm always sitting with my mother, so she's always asking me. (II3, 250-256)

Daily conversations in the home about college life provided necessary repetition and reinforcement enabling her mother to acquire words pertaining to EQ's educational world, such as "project," "cover page," and "rubric." EQ's example of teaching her mother the meaning of the word "rubric" at home points to valuable teaching practice of making academic concepts comprehensible, which is important for teaching children in an English-medium environment. Her example also illustrates that, like FS, she acted as a surrogate teacher (Levine, 2011). While FS has a very different early years experience from EQ, both accounts exemplify their agency in integrating schooling-related vocabulary into Local Arabic talk.

As a new mother with a young son, MM's account also provides a further counterpoint. MM resided with her mother-in-law and her husband's extended family while her husband was studying in the United States. Accordingly, she communed in a household with many young children, providing her firsthand insights into how the young children around her two-year old son learn to code-switch using Local Arabic with English vocabulary. According to MM and other participants, young children also took on similar code-switching patterns. As shown in the following extract, MM reported that "Sometimes even the little ch - children, they said like, for example, 'cats' or 'ball', or - you know? They say it - the sentence is Arabic but they said some words in English. So there's SOME English in our talk also." (II10, 21-24) MM then explained that she taught her toddler to use the English word for "cat" and "bathroom" before teaching him the Arabic equivalents.

When I asked why she used these English words before their Arabic equivalents, she offered that such high-frequency words were necessary language training for her son given plans to join her husband in the United States. In the following extract, MM conveyed her motivations

for priming her son with English words: “I’m afraid that if I put him in the nursery and he don’t know – and they don’t know Arabic, maybe he say ‘bathroom’ – ah - ‘*hamam*’ like in Arabic. And they don’t know that he said ‘*hamam*’ or so I have to teach him.” (II10, 21-47) MM explained her son needed to know how to use English in daycare when among non-Arabic-speaking Americans.

Drawing on a dozen accounts of different households, a parallel practice of daily conversation in the home consists of Local Arabic with English vocabulary. In this dynamic, the participants drew on their formative experiences learning in English and learning to teach in English at the college to introduce salient vocabulary to family members, consolidate learning among siblings, and also actively teach content knowledge from the government curriculum in English and Local Arabic. Via sustained use at home, the participants reported that various family members accepted and dynamically reproduced these patterns of code-switching but others, namely mothers, resisted this practice in ways that protected established patterns of Local Arabic. One exception is MM, who as an Emirati pre-service teacher and a mother herself, actively taught her son to use high-frequency vocabulary due to her migration agenda, exemplifying a different orientation from an older generation of mothers.

As suggested, the findings challenge claims surrounding the impact of English-knowing nannies and maids on the increased use of English in the home domain (Troudi & Jendli, 2011) and instead positions these Emirati participants as agents of English language change and spread (Jenkins, 2007). Using theories of macro-acquisition of English to explain “the transformation of an existing speech community into a bilingual speech community” (Brutt-Griffler, 2002, p. 144), these findings provide scope for further research on patterns of English use in contexts where

Emirati Arabic is expected, particularly as concerns home language practices. These findings suggest social processes whereby education-related English vocabulary become integrated into Emirati Arabic. Accordingly, the Emirati home context echoes the potency of face-to-face conversations among family members (Berger & Luckmann, 1971), particularly when apprehending the utility of English for describing social experience and suggests a closer look at macro-acquisition processes in Local Arabic.

6.2.4. Local Arabic with Broken Arabic

While Local Arabic is a favoured way of speaking to fellow Emiratis, both inside and outside the college environment, the participants also reported simplifying Local Arabic for communication with non-Arab workers in various labour and service sectors. Such workers include female domestic workers employed to work in Emirati homes, such as female maids and nannies, and, also, male drivers and gardeners. Although the participants did not mention using this mode at the college, there is some scope to consider this pattern viable among Arabic-knowing cleaners and gardeners. The participants indicated that English is not featured in this mode but that English becomes a default choice when communication in Arabic cannot be sustained. Nevertheless, this mode is significant for understanding the participants' orientation to intelligible communication and willingness to modify language to suit the linguistic profile of the interactants.

Interactions in public venues in Abu Dhabi outside the home, such as hospitals and shops, sometimes feature Local Arabic to support basic communication. This pattern occurs among non-Arab expatriate workers and Emiratis, and is preferred if the Emirati does not have English

resources. EM, who described social interactions she observed between her illiterate mother and nurses in Abu Dhabi hospitals, reported the use of high-frequency words in Local Arabic pertaining to the medical issue in question:

Some nurses or some - some nurses, they have - uhm – (*EM inhales*) They know some Arabic words which is – uh - high frequency words [MV: Right] at that case. [MV: Right. Right.] So they know the meaning of that word if – if – if the mom said it in Arabic cause they know the meaning of that word and this is happen also in the – in some shops. [MV: Okay] Yeah. (II7, 466-469)

EM suggested that shopkeepers are like nurses and will assist non-English speaking Emirati patients or customers in a basic form of Arabic to ensure the communication is intelligible.

Like FS, EM was raised in a small desert village in the Western Region and her experiences prompted her to state authoritatively that this mode is called Broken Arabic. Broken Arabic, as she puts it, is favoured more strongly there because Emiratis are the dominant majority. As she puts it, in the Western Region, there are many “Indian [labourers, and] we talk with them in Arabic, and not exactly Arabic: the broken Arabic.” (II7, 817-8) Similarly, AY described a similar dynamic of communication with non-Arabic speakers, conveying that this pattern is present within the urban confines of Abu Dhabi. The extract below illustrates signals from the interactant which lead her to use her Local Arabic alongside, what she calls, their Broken Arabic:

Or ONCE they – they give – they give me like a few words in Arabic like we have the – um – ‘broken Arabic’ (*AY giggles*), they talk to me in ‘broken Arabic,’ I will talk to them

in Arabic. Or if I didn't understand their 'broken Arabic', I will talk to them in English.

(II5, 73-6)

AY repeatedly offered the label of Broken Arabic to describe a way of simplifying the Arabic she uses with rudimentary vocabulary. Her usage of the label shows a willingness to cooperate with this mode, but if understanding is not achieved, AY would then try the interchange in English, an option which was not as viable in the Western Region.

According to several participants, full-time domestic workers under sponsorship of an Emirati head of the household acquire some proficiency in Local Arabic. For instance, KH, who had an Ethiopian maid, claimed her maid acquired common words and expressions through social interaction in Local Arabic, which was sufficient for addressing her household duties. Initially, she credited the maid's skills in language acquisition, but, later, acknowledged that she, in fact, modelled simple sentences in Local Arabic as a means of teaching her basic expressions, as explained below:

KH: My maid she become - she's from Ethiopia but now she started talking more in mother tongue.

MV: Okay, so she's speaking like you [KH: in the]. So did you teach her? [KH: they]

KH: No, she got the language from [MV: oh] our talking, they got the language fast.

MV: So she just acquired from living - is it with you - from the home?

KH: No.

MV: So did you originally use English with her?

KH: I teach her, ‘This is my *abaya*’. I talk with her in Arabic, ‘*abaya*’. ‘This is’ - and now she used to, and now she can put all the words in sentence. Like not perfect sentence, but she - she can talk in mother.

MV: How do you feel about her using Emirati (p) Arabic?

KH: I think it’s better for me. Now she’s – she understand. She’s – uh - I can - it’s the best way to communicate with her. (II 4, 391-404)

This extract shows KH modelling the use of “This is –,” a teaching strategy from Audiolingualism, using “sentence frames” whereby simple sentence patterns are modelled with emphasis on where new content can be substituted or inserted (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2013). Via KH’s instruction, her maid accessed basic language training in Local Arabic to acquire sufficient linguistic skills for communicating using simple sentences related to her domestic duties. As KH indicated, the maid did not become fluent but could function in this language. MM reported a similar dynamic with her son’s Filipino nanny. Although “good in English” (II10, 96), MM reported that, “The nanny tries to speak in Arabic. [...] But not that Arabic, not perfect Arabic [...] Broken Arabic.” (II10, 73-80)

Of note, EQ reported a similar dynamic with her mother, who came to the UAE speaking English and Filipino. In the following extract, EQ identified that since her mother did not know Local Arabic when she married her father, they used English together as a temporary phase until she learned enough Local Arabic to function:

so because of this barrier we use English and then she develop herself, you know, family gathering and she get - learn some word like that, and now, *al humdulilah, yani*, not perfect local but you can understand at least. (II3, 418-420)

Even though her mother is not proficient in Local Arabic, EQ proudly described her mother speaking intelligibly in Local Arabic. In a subsequent phase of the interview, EQ explained that her mother's acquisition of Local Arabic in the home domain proceeded through having her children teach her key vocabulary, which she practiced through ongoing social interaction among extended family members.

Such accounts of non-native Local Arabic speakers in the home domain underscore the vitality of Local Arabic in ways that challenge perceived threats of English to Local Arabic. They also demonstrate that social processes, often led by the participants, initiate new Arabic users into suitable communication patterns for this domain. The participants convey that intelligibility, as measured by the achievement of a meaningful exchange of information pertaining to needs and wants, is prioritised over grammatical accuracy in Local Arabic. Whether immigrant mothers or migrant workers, the participants recognised that Local Arabic is a suitable lingua franca in the home and in varied public settings. However, in the event that Local Arabic is not available, and the default lingua franca of English, is, then English is readily chosen. This dynamic showcases one dimension of local linguistic complexity (Risager, 2016) that challenges claims that English is used in the home domain (Troudi & Jendli, 2011) by adding several accounts of settings inside and outside the home where Broken Local Arabic is preferred over

English. It also points to the utility of language teaching strategies featured at the college for enabling participants, like KH, to teach non-native speakers of Local Arabic.

6.2.5. Local Arabic with Other Varieties of Arabic

A handful of participants cited past and present encounters with speakers of other varieties of Arabic as salient for developing interest in practicing other varieties of Arabic at the college. Key influences included former teachers from primary and secondary school, university teachers, administrative staff, and security guards at the college. Two orientations of receptive engagement and productive practice appeared in the participants' accounts. For instance, EM expressed greater curiosity in listening to her bilingual teacher use her Arabic accent over English in class (EM, II7, 574). Similarly, AM led an entertaining discussion with her FG peers when detailing the various phonological distinctions of each accent she has encountered (FG3, 175-214). However, FH reported learning from television programmes how to speak Moroccan Arabic and Egyptian Arabic and then seeking opportunities on the campus to engage in playful conversation with speakers of these varieties of Arabic. Accordingly, I refer to this pattern of conversational activity as Local Arabic with other varieties of Arabic.

As an example of productive practice, FH described routine small talk she had with expatriate security guards in the TTC's main lobby. In the extract below, she recounted that she found interactions involving taking on other Arabic accents and slang highly amusing:

MV: So then – uhm - the security guards, you mostly speak in -

FH: in Egyptian! (*FH laughs*)

MV: Egyptian and not - Arabic, right? Because the woman's Egyptian, isn't she?

FH: I talk to them in Egyptian.

MV: You could - you could speak Egyptian-Arabic?

FH: Yeah. (*MV laughs*)

MV: How did you learn it?

FH: We learn everything in Arab and we learn how to talk in Morocco. Everything.

Because we watching drama, and like this. And we like that. You know, this funny Egyptian when they talk, their slang is very funny. So we want to ta - they are so funny when they talk. Like this. And he said, '*Eh, maalik*' like this. It's so funny when you talk in – in Egyptian. (II8, 623-634)

This extract also shows FH's insistence on calling this mode of talking "Egyptian" instead of Arabic or Egyptian-Arabic as I offered. In this extract, I recognise that I employed a teaching strategy for error correction to signal that her use of "Egyptian" seemed confusing or incorrect. I first recast my preference for "Arabic" (to suggest his way of speaking was a language) with Egyptian (to highlight the security guard's national identity). I then offered "Egyptian-Arabic" to suggest this was a variety of Arabic. However, FH repeated "Egyptian" four times in this extract affirming that this was the label she wanted to use for this way of talking.

Later in the interview, FH pointed out that the bilingual guards did not understand her Local Arabic talk and urged her to use Standard Arabic. In so doing, FH conveyed that communication across non-standard Arabic varieties is not always suitable:

They not understand us sometimes. He said, ‘What? What did you say?’ I - I translate to the Formal Arabic. ‘Ok, that’s ta-ta-ta-ta. Ok.’ They said, ‘Okay. Okay. You should say this word.’ I said, ‘No. We can’t. We didn’t used to it.’ (*FH laughs*) (II8, 622-634)

FH’s accounts of conversing with the security guards show that the interaction draws on Egyptian Arabic, Local Arabic, and Standard Arabic. It also illustrates moments of breakdown where unknown words in one variety can be recast in another.

Some observations about linguistic awareness can be made from FH’s accounts as well as those of the other participants. Firstly, the media is a source of information about other varieties of Arabic. Secondly, whether seeking speaking or listening opportunities, this kind of linguistic practice is regarded as engaging. Thirdly, while several participants enjoyed being entertained by the sounds of various accents, engaging non-Emirati Arabic-speakers appears to establish rapport and a positive spirit of intercultural learning. In addition, when intelligibility is not always achieved, other varieties of Arabic can be offered as linguistic resources.

6.2.6. Local Arabic with Korean words

For a few participants, another hybrid pattern of conversational activity is the addition of Korean words to Local Arabic talk among peers at the college. Korean is described as a recent arrival to the participants’ linguistic worlds. AY explained that globalisation has changed many aspects of her lifestyle beyond fashion, such as language (II5, 128-129). The import of “Korean dramas” has prompted her keen interest in the Korean language, *Hangul*, and represents an indirect influence with Korean culture, which is not mediated by face-to-face interactions with

proficient speakers of Korean. According to MM, her friends signalled the best films to watch. As she put it, “most of [...] my friends say, ‘See this. See this.’” (II0, 674). Like AY, both FH and MM credited Korean films, with English subtitles, for sparking their interest in learning to speak in Korean (II8, 15-19; II10, 674-699). However, given my own proficiency in Korean, I recognised that the participants’ reperotoires was limited to a few, informal expressions. As such, I refer to Korean words to draw parallels to other practices with Local Arabic with English words to signal a particular social context which gives rise to code-switching.

FH’s interest in Korean did not lie in learning to speak grammatically correct sentences (II8, 15-39). Rather her purpose for speaking Korean was to flag her awareness of *global youth culture* (Galloway & Rose, 2015). Parallels can be draw to Ryan’s (2009) study of the interest that young Japanese people have of learning English. He concluded that commitment to learning English was not stated in terms of using English with English users but rather “factors in the learner’s immediate social environment or personal experience that mediate these surface attractions of the language” (p. 405). FH demonstrated her interest in Korean youth culture by punctuating casual Local Arabic talk at the college with fellow Korean-knowing peers with greetings, friendly insults and side-comments in rudimentary Korean. FH neither mentioned wanting to practice her Korean skills with Koreans nor did she pursue practicing simple conversations in Korean with me during the interview. Like FH, MM learned some Korean expressions, primarily to keep abreast of trends signaled by her peers. However, in sharp contrast to FH, MM expressed hopes to be able to impress Koreans that she might meet in the UAE one day.

MM and FH show two different orientations to the Korean language. Yet both accounts show similar patterns of appropriating linguistic content from the media. In FH's case, she appropriated Korean words and expressions from watching Korean dramas to add new lexical resources to her linguistic repertoire. She incorporated popularised expressions from the Korean she heard on television into her Local Arabic conversations when sitting with in-group peers at the college. In contrast, MM followed her peers' recommendations for particular Korean dramas. Translations provided via written English offered MM great entertainment value, particularly when watching interpersonal relationships develop between men and women. Watching Korean dramas generated new intercultural insights. She explained that particular films prompted her realisations of shared values between Korean and her own culture. In this sense, English is the medium through which MM accessed vital information about Korean, a foreign language and culture she recently became interested in. Although no participants mentioned Japanese, it is possible that Japanese carries a similar appeal, as noted by record levels of *manga* titles borrowed from the TTC library (van den Hoven et al., 2014).

None of the three participants mentioned trying out their Korean with the small, but increasing, number of Korean expatriates, recently employed in the oil and gas and engineering sectors in the Abu Dhabi emirate (Crowcroft, 2012) and in medical tourism initiatives in other emirates (Malek, 2014). Given growth in these industries, opportunities to converse in simple Korean could potentially appear in the near future. MM, who is expectant that, one day, she could put her new language skills into use by introducing herself and her culture, conveyed that Korean, like English, are vehicles for intercultural communication and self-expression, as explained below:

I feel really good because if - like if I meet a Korean or if I meet a 'foreign', like someone speaks English, it will be more - there's a connection, I can talk both [...] also I want to represent my country and if I don't speak English or like some Korean, I will not be able to say something about my country, about how I feel about, you know. (II10, 721-728)

Because television programming and other forms of media access have fueled interest in aspects of Korean and other Arabic-speaking cultures, they deserve further attention for promoting linguistic and intercultural awareness. At the college, FH drew on content she accessed via the media to gain insights into how to pronounce words when interacting with staff at the college. In addition to exposure to a range of Arabic accents, she also learned some Korean expressions which she practiced playfully with her friends. MM also credited recommendations from her friends about which Korean films to watch. However, unlike FH, MM hoped that her knowledge of Korean would complement her English skills and enable her to represent the UAE to speakers of these languages when the time comes.

In this sense, television programming and downloadable movies offered a viable way that several participants could increase their intercultural awareness of foreign cultures and languages. Without regular opportunities to meet female Korean speakers face-to-face, it is unlikely that FH or MM would develop linguistic proficiency in Korean. Conversations among peers served as the impetus to recognise the social value of popularised Korean expressions and practice them. Based on the participants' accounts, it appears that incorporating Korean into talk

with friends is premised on shared access to Korean films, and is bound to sustained interest in this aspect of popular culture.

It also appears that English is needed. Without English subtitles, access to the cultural and linguistic content carried by Korean dramas, and for that matter, Japanese *manga*, is constrained. I argue that while interest in this aspect of Korean culture is unstable and located on the margins of college life, the media acts as a proxy for the kind of face-to-face intercultural experiences, which are largely inaccessible to college-aged Emirati women outside of home and educational domains. Since the media also provides vital access to other varieties of Arabic, the media operates as a resource which also fosters the participants' incursions into multilingual language play, or translingual practice (Canagarajah, 2012). As such, further consideration of the media as a resource for raising awareness of the ethnolinguistic diversity of the UAE is also recommended.

6.2.7. *Arabish*

“Arabish” is a hybrid language mode for use among bilingual peers at the college. This label appears in the literature, describing it as a hybrid Arabic chat language, which is also known in Arabic as “*Arabizi*” (Leech, 2013, p. 4). In this mode, phonemes (sounds) from Local Arabic talk is represented with graphemes (letters) from the alphabet as well as numerals. As put by AL, “letters are English letters but [...] the pronunciation is Arabic” (FG1, 71-2). AL contended that this representation of Arabish was a clear and rational choice for use among peers since “if I wrote the—the letters in Arabic and - the word- the meaning of the word is English - she might get confused” (FG1, 229-230).

Arabish, then, is the label known in English for a phenomenon also recognised in Arabic. Of note, the label, Arabish, also incorporates features of linguistic hybridity. Here, the root word of Arabic, “Arab” is blended with the English language suffix, “-ish” from the word, “English.” Similarly, the Arabic variant, “Arabizi,” reveals the same patterns since “*Arabizi*” blends the Arabic word for “Arabic,” or “*Arabiya*” with the Arabic word for “English, which sounds like “*Englizi*.” Arabish (or *Arabizi*) is also reported in the literature as a new variety of “e-Arabic” (Daoudi, 2011, p. 285). As a well-recognised phenomenon that caters for bilingual Arabic-speaking computer-literates around the world, it serves as a “default for written communication among the young in text messages, in email and online” (Leech, 2013, p. 4). Indeed, as HM reported, “in Blackberry Messenger we talk in our accent” (II9, 862). While originally associated with digital communication among young Emirati women (Piecowyte, 2003), it serves as written communication for the spoken language. However, as I reported in van den Hoven (2014a), Arabish is no longer limited to the digital realm since the participants reported using it for informal, handwritten notes (FG1, 70-71).

In the local media, the written form is described as “a phonetic mish-mash of Arabic sounds and Roman characters that has become one of the most common and convenient modes of written communication for Arabic-speaking youth” (Leech, 2013, p. 4). Like fears generated by textspeak for English (Galloway & Rose, 2015), this way of modifying Arabic has generated some debate about contaminating Arabic. However, as Daoudi (2011) contends, “the language change happening to Arabic is a natural phenomenon and [...] e-Arabic is a direct result of language contact” (p. 287). For the participants, however, texting in this way was a practical skill that has been integrated into their linguistic repertoire for communication with peers at the

college. Mediated by the characters and space available via mobile phone technology, the participants regarded Arabish as the most expedient choice to convey their thoughts in written form among peers.

6.2.8. TTC-flavour English

“TTC-flavour English” (EM, FG3, 327) is a label provided for another hybrid language mode. EM identified this mode as the preferred in-group talk among TTC peers and conveyed that it was a unique to her college-based speech community. From the accounts of several participants, I gleaned that this way of talking is a unique formula of Local Arabic talk with systematic patterns of English code-switching, word-borrowing and word-blending; however, it was not clear if the base language was English or Arabic. Some participants expressed that this mode is closer to the English side of the Arabic-English continuum. In discussion with peers, KH first described it as mixing “Arabic in English” (FG2, 118) to which HD responded by emphasising that “the major language is English” (FG2, 118-119). However, in reviewing the participants’ accounts, it appears that the base language of this mode is somewhat ambiguous. For instance, EM originally viewed this mode as “English and Arabic” (FG3, 286) but, in a follow-up interview, she contended that “it’s not English and not Arabic!” (II7, 295) and, then, after a moment of hesitation, she posited that it may be “a new language? We can say a new language?” (II7, 297)

At first look, this practice bears some parallels to another hybrid mode used at home: Local Arabic with English words. However, three distinctions related to patterns of word-borrowing and word-blending appear. Firstly, word borrowing from English features more often.

According to EM, there may be between one English word per 15-50 Arabic words in talk at home but in the TTC talk, she said: “we use three words in Arabic and one word in English.” (FG3, 234) Secondly, it features a greater preponderance of specialised English vocabulary related to the discipline of Education due to its use among fellow bilingual TTC students. In the following extract, HD and EQ described this hybrid mode as ‘English’ and identified that specialised vocabulary learned in the college was a main characteristic:

- HD: Also our projects when we say – ah - when we discuss our projects with
EQ: in Arabic
HD: we don’t ah – we don’t talk - talk - ah - Arabic mostly. We talk - we talk English.
EQ: yeah
HD: ah - we talk in English
EQ: We use the language that they gave us - like. (FG2, 109-110)

In a next phase of the discussion, KH and her peers provided an example of how mixing happened at the sentence-level:

- KH: Yeah like I say for [~~student name~~]: ‘ah I did - ah - in Arabic - I say - ah –
‘*ensowait* onomatopeia’ - like this.
EQ: So we don’t have ‘onomatopoeia’.
KH: We don’t know what ‘onomatopoeia’ is in Arabic, actually.
EQ: So we use English.
KH: And then, yes, so we -

HD: English so we understand.

EQ: Yeah. (FG2, 120-122)

As developed by KH and HD, there are two reasons for word borrowing of technical terminology: 1) lack of knowledge of the Arabic variant; and, 2) the newly appreciated relevance of the concept was acquired in English. Although the participants described TTC-flavour English as English, their reports described *intra-sentential code-switching* (Levine, 2011), where Arabic grammar structured sentences which featured discipline-specific English vocabulary that generated the meaning and focus of the talk. In this language mode, specialised, academic words, primarily related to the professional domain of teaching and learning, such as “onomatopoeia,” “project,” “procedures,” “steps,” “goals,” and “learning outcomes” (FG2, 124-125) are prevalent.

A third feature distinguishes TTC-flavour English from Local Arabic with English words and leads me to categorise it as an Arabic mode. This is the incursion of word-blending. In this hybrid mode, academic English words are not only added but also inflected with Arabic morphemes from its grammar to allow flexible incorporation of English into Arabic talk. Being a teacher of a Year 2 applied linguistics course called English Morphology, I recognise the technical terminology for this process, which was taught to the participants. According to the course content, the key word is “blending.” However, AM chose to describe it as “combining” (FG3, 62), a similar but different process where two meaningful content-words are joined together, as in snowball. AM exemplified her understanding of the linguistic phenomenon by explaining the hybridisation of the word, “vocab-at.” In her example, “vocabulary” is shortened to “vocab” (taught as a linguistic process known called “clipping”) and the Arabic morpheme “-at” is added as a suffix. AM’s description was as follows: “‘Vocab’ is the English word and ‘at’

is the Arabic word” (FG3, 62). Another similar innovation is the hybridised word, “en-focus.” In the extract below, AM explained with support from GA and EM how it works:

AM: the word, ‘focus’, ‘*ensein*’ (*GA laughs*) [MV: okay] The word, focus, *Arabic*, we say, this word become familiar with - between us

EM: because ‘focus’ in Arabic means - ah - If I want ‘to focus’, I will say it ‘*orakis*’.

[GA: ‘*Orakis*’]

MV: As a verb?

AM: Yeah [GA: yeah]. And the word in English, ‘focus’ so if I want (*AM laughs*) to combine these two words in Arabic and English I said ‘*Infocus*’. (*MV laughs*) *En* – *en* from *Arakis* in Arabic, and ‘focus’ in a - yeah [EM: eh – ‘en’?] (FG3, 246-252)

The participants considered this way of modifying Arabic morphemes and English root words among fellow bilinguals in informal settings at the college as not only appropriate but, also, fun. In fact, a certain amount of enthusiasm generated from introducing the linguistic practice of TTC-flavour English is evident in the passage below:

EM: And this is just between – ah - TTC students! (*GA laughs*) [AM: Yeah!] [MV: So this is a] Really.

MV: You mean this is a special way of a - [AM: Yeah.] [EM: Yeah.] [GA: Yeah!] ?

GA: Because these words we use it – ah – more – ah - in – ah - at the college [AM: m-hm] ah - when we ah do the - our projects, yeah [AM: yeah, our work or] so we use these vocabs more so we are - ah - ah - WE USE IT!

EM: And we are FAMILIAR with these words now! [AM: mm] *Vocabat!* (FG3, 64-70).

In a follow-up interview, EM offered further details regarding the morphology of TTC-flavour English, as shown in the following extract:

EM: sometimes we use this language or we combine the two language just for fun!
[MV: m] Just for fun. (*MV laughs*) I remember the first time I used the word, 'Close the door' [MV: m-hm] but with compounding Arabic and – uh – English. My friends - [MV: So what did you say?] my friends surprised. (p) 'What do you want? 'I didn't - I didn't point. 'Close the door with my finger'.

MV: But what did you say?

EM: Ah – '*kelwisi* door'. (*EM laughs; MV laughs*) '*kel- kel-wizi*' – ah - that's mean, 'close the door'. 'zi', '*zi*' - it's in Arabic.

MV: It means what?

EM: Uhm – (p)

MV: Is it a morpheme?

EM: A morpheme- uh - like an order. But not exactly 'close'. We use it just for the end of the word. Like for - ah - like for an order. I don't know how to explain it in Arabic.

MV: It's like a suffix.

EM: Yeah. Exactly - the suffix! We use it in the last of the word – uh - as 'an order'. So, I took the English word, 'close,' and mix it (*EM laughs*) – combined with the – with the last letter to make it – uh - as one word. (II7, 299-315)

Of note, EM recognised several concepts which I supplied, such as “morpheme,” “suffix,” and “compounding” from her second year applied linguistics class. She also offered “compounding” in her explanation of how she combines words and alluded to the significance of linguistic processes for word-generation.

For MM, this way of talking dominated her classroom experience. She estimated that she was in this mode about “ninety percent” (II10, 456) of her talking time in class, citing that she mostly talked with her classmates at these times. Her estimations suggest that the remaining ten percent of talk time was direct interactions with the teacher in English. MM’s accounts suggests the significance of this mode as a key way the participants contended with the TTC coursework and difficult concepts. As a result, this mode appears as a student-generated response to the use of EMI at the college.

As evidenced from EM’s keen participation in two focus groups and an in-depth individual interview, EM recognised a special opportunity to explain the dynamics of encountering and acquiring the special code. In the extract below, EM also recognised her agency in socialising other college students from other year groups into this mode:

Because sometimes we are us - ah - (p) coming to the college with the bus, all of us - on the same bus - at the same bus. Sometimes and we have another girl, other girls [AM: from other sections, and other years also] from other stations, Foundations, B.Ed. 1 [GA: B.Ed 1, Grade 2] sometimes we use, for example, the word ‘*en-focus*’ they feel strange. *In-focus*? [AM: And they laugh - the person] ‘What do you mean ‘*in-focus*’?’ (MV laughs) and then we explain what we mean ‘*in-focus*.’ (FG3, 279-284)

EM identified that the bus is one kind of social space which is ripe for inducting other students into the special language, a process which involves modeling and explanation. Later in the discussion, EM added that students often have mixed reactions when they encounter this special language for the first time, and, as the following two extracts indicate, TTC teachers are also confounded:

They respond from this – from the teacher, they said, ‘Is it an English word?’ They surprised. ‘Is it an English word, or what? Or different language?’ Because not - not in Arabic. And they heard something in English but not exactly English. About the other students – um - they skip this word. They thought this is a new English words. A new. They don’t know the meaning of that. So some of them, they skip. If they are our friends, they stop and ask us. ‘What – what – what *kelwizi* door mean?’ ‘What do you mean by *kelwizi*?’ That – ah – that time, we explained that, ‘It’s a mix of Arabic and - and English words. ‘Close the door’. And so on. (II7, 358-364)

EM explained that TTC students from the same year group favour this mode because of the amount of face-to-face conversations generated from a shared roster of courses and assignments. Although this language mode is acquired and freely used among peers in various zones at the college, and also practiced on the phone, the process of peer induction is usually conducted out of the earshot of teachers, as indicated in the extract below:

- EM: Even on the phone, we use it t-together in the classroom, the hallway – ah - and sometimes we - we say it between each other and the teacher heard this - that word. And they surprise, ‘Is it an English word?’ (*EM raises tone and laughs*)
- MV: And then what do you do? (*EM laughs*)
- EM: We say, ‘This is a language between each other.’ (*EM laughs*) (II7, 346-350)

However, as EM suggested, although TTC teachers encounter this mode, it is not intended for them, and they do not replicate it.

Other participants suggested that this way of communicating is easy, fun and trendy for use among fellow bilinguals in informal settings in and around the college, but it is decidedly inappropriate for young children in schools, as discussed below:

- AM: For me it’s like [EM: trend] [GA: a trend] Yeah a trend. Because I don’t think so [GA: and] if I will go to teach in English, I will use the same words. (*quietly*)
- GA: No, you should - no.
- AM: Because the kids will be [EM: They will lose - They will lose.]
- MV: They will lose what?
- EM: They will lose the [AM: They will lose the-]
- AM: Language. [EM: the language]
- EM: If this word is Arabic or English.
- AM: Also they will confused also.
- GA: And how’s that?

AM: So the word if, for example, the word, you, the teacher teaching us is ‘focus’
(*quietly*) [GA: *inaudible?*] and she said ‘*in-focus*’, what’s the different? So they
are kids, but they can understand. And they want someone to explain that there is
different between THIS and THIS. We use this word when – when we want to
talk with, for example, with our friends but at school we have to use the REAL
words. [GA: real English language] Without any prefix and suffix [GA: yeah]
from Arabic. (*AM laughs; GA laughs*) (FG3, 302-317)

The extract signals the participants’ orientations towards standard varieties of English and Arabic for pedagogical purposes but they recognise that young children can recognise and interpret meanings from code-switching practices. So while they find the mode engaging when used amongst each other, the extract reveals that the participants consider the hybrid talk unsuitable for children in schools. Two reasons can be discerned. Firstly, it will interfere with acquiring norm-dependent models of English and, secondly, it will blur the boundaries between the two languages. This extract also indicates that these participants also recognise their influence in organic processes of language shift, but, as future English-medium teachers (EMTs), it is their responsibility to model “real” English words.

The participants’ accounts suggest that TTC-flavour English is an actively developed skill in linguistic creativity. As English-knowing bilinguals, they reported developing this linguistic practice amongst each other as a way of processing academic content accessed in their English-medium classrooms. Similar patterns are reported in other educational contexts in Singapore and Malaysia, where English-speaking bilinguals are nurtured at a younger age in

schools using EMI. Language shift via locally-developed norms for English, including lexical borrowings and grammatical innovations, has led to interest in codification of new varieties of English (Ling, 2010). Researchers in these and other contexts, identified as Outer Circle users of English, consider English as a second language for intra-national use also consider linguistic practices ripe for research into English as a Lingua Franca practices (Galloway & Rose, 2015). This linguistic behaviour draws important parallels to students in Outer Circle contexts.

Of note, in admitting that this mode is “a trend” for use just “between each other” the participants in this study indicated that this language mode is unstable and limited to their tightly-bound speech community of TTC students. They also do not claim this pattern can be extrapolated to the wider community although one participant recognised that this mode was accessible to Emirati students from other HE institutions in Abu Dhabi. Yet, as explained by Galloway and Rose (2015), ELF research is focussed “on examining how the use of ELF worldwide not only exhibits a lot of variation, but also adapts and changes in response to the communicative needs of its users in fluid contexts” (p. 142). As such, there is scope to document of linguistic innovations, which are context-dependent and speaker-dependent (Galloway & Rose, 2015). This should include not only TTC-flavour English but also Arabish and other hybrid patterns of code-switching.

6.3. English Modes

This section turns to four English modes. They include: 1) Simple English, 2) Learner English, 3) Academic English, and 4) Simplified English. In contrast to Arabic use in the UAE, the use of English has generated rich commentary and insights into linguistic features of a local

variety of English (Boyle, 2011; Fussell, 2011) and student perceptions of learning English (Randall & Samimi, 2010). Fussell (2011) refers to “communicative encounters ... [which have] managed to penetrate a wide variety of domains across the Gulf region” (p. 26) to offer a notion of a Gulf English with a “decidedly local flavour” (p. 26) in terms of choice of vocabulary, grammar, phonology, and lexis for use across a variety of domains from tertiary education to various workplaces. Other references to English as a “lingua franca at all levels of society” (Randall & Samimi, 2010, p. 43) highlight the “pragmatics of the routine administration of society” (p. 44). Such claims are helpful in affirming distinct orientations to English emerging from the multicultural environment in the Gulf. However, as broad labels, they collapse diverse conversational practices ranging from shopping malls to educational domains into a generic and homogeneous pattern.

A sharp contrast is noted by the participants’ use of labels and metaphors for the place of English in their lives. They suggested English served distinct social experiences, which necessitated a malleable tool which could address a range of communicative purposes among an array of interactants. As with Arabic, participants did not convey they recognised a generic Gulf variety of English, EM and AM specified that, like Arabic, English had different registers and varieties (FG3, 160-163). While the theme of the value of English for an “underlying pragmatic imperative” (Randall & Samimi, 2010, p. 49) is evident in the participants’ accounts, richer understandings of linguistic variation appear as well as a sense of its social necessity. For instance, AY said that English was “an access tool to the knowledge [...] to communication, [...] to - ah - business to - [...] everything,” (FG1, 401-403), and initiated a list of distinct bodies of social experiences where she used English. In another focus group, AM asserted that “if you

have English language you have everything nowadays. And if you want to – (p) find a job, first thing they – ah - ask us – ah – our - about the English language – if we have the English language or not. So it's - uhm (*clears throat*), an important right (*laughs*). (FG3,

After asserting that English was an important right, AM and EM then proceeded to co-construct a metaphor of English as a key. They developed an understanding that Emirati adults should have their own key, the freedom to use this key to open doors to different kinds of domains, and attendant responsibilities to know how and when to use it:

It's like a key for going out of UAE. (p) To know things around you - not from –not in UAE [...] you have to be LEARNING English first. (*quietly*) [...] I want to describe - describe the English language as a key [...] I will take it out from my handbag – ah - when I want to use it, and then I will return the key. I would return the key to my handbag. (p) I will take it OUT from my handbag when I want to use it in the public place, (p) or when I will use it - ah - in the college [AM: Someone who would NOT speaking Arabic] Yeah. [GA: Yeah.] And I will return the key to my handbag. (FG2, 923-951)

For EM and AM, individual keys would help Emiratis help themselves. Similarly, EQ offered a metaphor of English as a rope, which, in contrast, allowed her to help others, such as children as well as those who did not understand her Arabic:

like when two people, when two persons, *yani*, they enter. (pp) Okay imagine that a mountain and one person standing. [...] And he want to help the other one down. What

he can use? He can use the [...] Rope. I think English language like this. [...] like helping, *yani*. [...] For helping other people that I can communicate with them or like how to share ideas, or something like that, if they misunderstand my word I can use English language.

In addition to pragmatic purposes, the participants' labels and descriptions also highlighted awareness of individual agency, varied purposes, responsible decision-making, and particular concerns, suggesting a need for greater complexification (Trudgill, 2009) regarding patterns of communication in English and its place for Emiratis.

Accordingly, I relied on the participants' labels to describe the different kinds of conversational activity they experienced in English. As done with the Arabic modes, I include descriptions of types of interactants encountered, and linguistic features used for each pattern of conversational activity. I also discuss the participants' perspectives of using English to issues appearing within English language teaching (ELT) literature base. In this way, I address the first and second research questions concerning the participants' conceptions of English and the kinds of social influences which mediate their perspectives of English. By contextualising ways of using English within overall linguistic repertoires where Arabic use dominates, I highlight unique patterns and social influences relating English to its use in educational domains, including the use of EMI at the college.

6.3.1. Simple English

Among the English modes referenced in this study, Simple English closely resembles ways of using English widely recognised in the UAE and Gulf-based literature as a *de facto*

lingua franca (Randall & Samimi, 2010; van den Hoven & Carroll, 2017). This view of English as a language shared by a global community engenders metaphors of social function, power, and threat, ranging from “a powerful tool” (Fussell, 2011, p. 26) to “a double-edged sword” (Hopkins, 2014, p. 1). As seen in the UAE-based literature, described in chapter two, a range of metaphors are generated for the place of English in UAE society. The participants also generated metaphors, however, their metaphors shared perspectives of English as a resource serving discrete, pragmatic purposes used among multilingual expatriates. Their accounts showed they interacted with people who had a range of levels of linguistic proficiency in English. Their descriptions highlighted a concern for intelligibility over accuracy (van den Hoven, 2014b). Several extracts show the repetition of “simple English” to describe how they use English outside the college, although this should not be understood in a pejorative sense. In this section, I offer rich details of sociolinguistic practices, as reported by the participants, which highlight the importance of communicating daily needs and wants amongst a range of English users in “Simple English”.

As AY explained, she used very simple English to deal with here-and-now transactions appropriate to the domain of conversational activity: “For example, in the markets, ‘How much this one? Can you give me this one?’ Aaah – ‘Can I exchange my item with another thing?’ It’s very simple English. The related English to the place I am in” (II5, 78-80). Accordingly, she prioritised intelligible communication, which includes knowing the right words and the correct use of words in order “to avoid misunderstanding” (EM, FG3, 671). In this sense, Simple English emerges as a public mode of communication for this participants. It was important for her to use clear and easy-to-understand vocabulary to supports communication with diverse

speakers of English. In this mode, AY explained that she needed simple words, and not academic words (FG1, 86). She also specified that this a public mode of communication addressing her needs and wants, as seen in the following passage:

Outside the college I always use the simple English because we don't have DEEP conversations with the people [...] - outside the college. [...] Outside the college it's – ah – more about dealing with the people – more about [...] - communicating with the people – aah (ppp) - in the – (ppp) according to what - for example, [...] 'Give me my card'. 'Where is your - ?' 'Can I put this one here?' Or, 'What's the medicine?' (II5, 84-91)

This description shows AY's associations of this simple form of English, which contrasted with the deeper conversations she experienced inside the college.

Of conceptual importance to ELT discourses concerning English as a lingua franca (ELF), several participants offered that they activated this kind of English with native-speakers and non-native speakers of English alike. The participants identified speakers as “non-Arabic” (HD, FG4, 92), “the Indian or foreign” (KH, FG2, 259-260), or, as SR put it, “Philippine people. Most of them - Indian. Asian!” (II2, 172). In addition, there were several references to users being “from different countries, they are also learning English” (EQ, II3, 380), and who “don't have the ability to talk in Arabic” (KH, FG2, 74). As such, a non-academic way of using English emerges as a default lingua franca in Abu Dhabi. In this mode, exchanging clear and meaningful exchange of information is prioritised over building friendships (van den Hoven, 2014a). A similar phenomenon is reported in Dubai. In one study, English is reported as a lingua franca for the UAE and a necessary “means of communication in daily life” (Randall & Samimi, 2010, p.

44) in the domain of policing, where English is allegedly taking over as the main lingua franca in Dubai. Further parallels can also be drawn to Fussell's (2011) description of English in the Gulf, a linguistic phenomenon. Fussell reports that on the basis of his observations from Oman, contact between various Arabic-speakers and expatriate English users has constituted a variety called "Gulf English."

Anyone who speaks English in the Gulf can potentially be a user of Gulf English. This is inclusive of both local nationals as well as expatriate residents. What defines Gulf English is not the nationality of the user, but rather a user's application of a linguistic feature which makes reference in some way to a local concept or a local way of constructing meaning. (p.27)

Recognition of special users of a Gulf variety of English is also evident in curricular responses. Nickerson (2015) assesses the particular kind of English brought about by UAE-based "multicultural interactions" (p. 235) in order to establish needs for Emirati Business students to better understand and accommodate workplace environments. These research perspectives accord with the participants' understanding of English as a main language serving the speech community in Abu Dhabi. Such orientations will be discussed further in chapter seven.

Although the participants associated Simple English with public domains in Abu Dhabi, several participants noted that they also used this way of talking at the college, primarily in zones outside of the classroom. These participants cited closed access venues, where contracted employees perform cleaning services, and, also, special events hosted at the TTC, granting access to visitors. Several participants also categorised the kinds of workers at the TTC by

nationality, and affiliated employment zones within the TTC. For instance, hallways and bathrooms were zones for encountering cleaning staff, mostly of South East Asian origins, and the cafeteria was where they met Filipino cashiers (SR, II2; MM II10, 810). These typifications reflect regional patterns of employment opportunities (Davidson, 2009). These spaces differed from classrooms in addressing student needs and wants. Similarly, the lobby, guarded by security staff (HD, II1, 454) became a zone for using English intelligibly for fast food delivery transactions. However, the student lounge, as a space conducive for hosting a range of international visitors from the community, was identified as a zone for using English. Here English was used to develop social interests during special, intra-curricular events, such as International Week, Health Week and Book Festivals.

A first observation concerns the issue of categorisation of English speakers. The findings offer a different focus on interactants' identities and social stigma than in ELF discussions. Firstly, the participants rarely distinguished native English-speakers from non-native English-speakers when describing interactions in this mode. For instance, EQ insinuated that everyone was an English learner (II3, 380). KH also offered that this kind of English was used by "different speakers from different countries" (FG2, 258-259) and "foreign speaker[s]" (FG2, 180). However, GA asserted that proficiency mattered. She described English users as having a possession. The English speakers she met in public domains were people who could potentially judge her negatively when she made mistakes, as noted in her statement: "Also, if I talk – ah - with anyone – ah - have the good English and I make mistake – ah - sometime they laugh – eh – they laugh – they laugh, yeah." (FG3, 676-677). In addition, GA indicated that she did not associate these English users with poor proficiency in English. Instead she distinguished English

users she met as having a lack of empathy for “mistakes.” As shown in the extract below, her TTC teachers did not exemplify Simple English users. According to GA, even though her teachers had “good English” and noticed errors, they were not judgemental:

AM: No, most teachers no!

GA: No, no because they want -

AM: They are not laughing because sometimes they are correcting us.

GA: because they want -

EM: Because they know we are learning.

For GA, “good English” was also a possession of users of Simple English she encountered in public domains. Her account points to a theme of social stigma based on poor proficiency, which, to date, is not prominent in the UAE-based literature. Further investigation into how “judgement” is activated in public domains in the UAE is thus warranted. My own earlier involvement with matched-guise research into varieties of English prevalent in the Gulf, as developed in perceptual dialectology (Labov, 1966; Lambert, 1967) yielded some interesting insights into how regional English “accents” are ranked in terms of intelligibility. Our study, however, was limited to six educated speakers of English (Kennetz et al., 2011) and used scripted recordings to control for errors instead of live-recordings of naturally-occurring speech, and so, did not reflect a range of levels of proficiency.

A further insight touches on the participants’ unique classifications of English users into social groups. For instance, native-English speakers, such as British, American and Canadian (HD, II1) belong to a category of “foreign,” a finding corroborated in Bristol-Rhys’ (2010)

ethnographic study on Emirati women, where the classification of foreign pertains to non-Arab social groups. Similarly, the participants' usage of foreigners points to ex-patriate English speakers, who are also non-Arabs and cast as out-group members of a shared Abu Dhabi speech environment. Of note, when the participants enter public domains, they can expect to use Simple English with a range of "foreign" speakers of English. However, nuanced associations of "foreign" and "foreign speakers" appear which suggest re-examination of what English means as a "foreign" language in this context.

However, "Indians" evoked fuzzy categorisations. Indians emerged as English speakers, who are not "foreign." They give rise to other categories, such as Asian and international. In SR's words, the public domain features the use of this kind of English with "Asian people [... since] they all, *yani*, all, it's international, *yani*, as you know, language so everybody talking in English. And if we want anything we talk in English with them, everywhere." (II2, 174-6] SR's account points to understandings of international speakers of English and English as an Asian language based on frequent interactions with Asian speakers of English in Abu Dhabi. In equating English as an international language and an Asian language (Kachru, 1998; Kirkpatrick, 2002, 2011a), SR's account raises questions as to how she positions herself as an Emirati in relation to Abu Dhabi's English-speaking community. Further complexities include interpreting interactions with Egyptians in Abu Dhabi. Several participants reported interacting with Egyptians in English (AM, GA & EM, FG3, 201-225), and not in Arabic, especially at fast food restaurants (HD, II1, 32-35). As such, fuzzy categories of social groups (Smart, 2003), such as foreigners, Indians and Egyptians, suggest dynamic understandings of inclusion and exclusion among the Abu Dhabi's English speakers, which merit further attention.

In sum, a way of using English is widely recognised in the UAE and Gulf-based literature as a lingua franca. The participants' characterisations of using English in public domains drew on delineations of professional status of users, domain of use, and purpose of use. This assessment included zones at the college which suited a simple way of speaking English that serves needs and wants. Several participants referred to using Simple English with people distinguished by their status as educators or non-educators, domains of use as either educational zones or public zones, and purposes of use as learning versus communicating needs. The participants' iterations of "good English" suggests experiences of judgement based on linguistic performance in public domains. For most interactions in public, language with simple vocabulary, which is appropriate for the communicative task is valued. As indicated previously, the participants' descriptions of Simple English users encountered in public domains do not evoke perjorative references informed by native or non-native speaker distinctions, which are prevalent in the ELT literature base (Medgyes, 1992). Instead foreign-international distinctions appear that warrant further clarification.

6.3.2. Learner English

Another way of using English, distinct from purposes in public domains, suggests awareness of a developmental phase. This dynamic appeared at the outset of learning experiences at the TTC. This mode was premised on gaining readiness for learning sufficient English for using EMI. Many participants described this mode in past tense, suggesting that it sat as on the doorstep of EMI experiences, akin to a liminal stage. Of note, the participants did not provide a label for this way of using English. Rather they characterised this phase by describing their linguistic status as a learner of English, who produced errors and required productive

practice with the language. As such, I use the label of Learner English to attend to the participants' emphasis of using English during a developmental phase. Using English as a learner marked an incursion into HE, which was separate from the realm of EMI.

Participants, like FM, suggested that graduation from government secondary schools did not ready them for the seriousness and rigour of academic learning in English. FM described her recognition of “a big gap” (FG4, 162). Thus, participation in a year-long programme at the college represented an intermediary stage for honing her academic readiness and English proficiency. At the TTC, this program is called “Foundations,” although in other UAE and international contexts, the label for this kind of programme is called Academic Bridging. For the participants, the Foundations programme represented an allowance of a year to improve their English before being initiated into an English-medium environment. As HM put it, through the Foundations programme, “We became more confident using the language than before” (FG4, 169). As such, this phase of using Learner English is characterised by a transformation from lack of confidence to confidence.

In this learning phase, the participants encountered teachers who provided developmentally-sequenced lessons, productive learning tasks, and individualised feedback. For some participants, it was the first engagement with English-speaking, male, Muslim college teachers from the Arab world, such as Sudan and Tunisia, as well as a wider range of male and female TESOL-trained teachers from around the world. At that juncture, the Foundations programme at the TTC had hired a range of teachers with varying degrees of experience within the region. The teachers hailed from more than 20 countries as varied as the US, the UK, New Zealand, Canada, Sudan, Tunisia, Malaysia, Somalia and Syria (van den Hoven, 2014a). In FH's

case, entering the college was the first time she ever interacted with non-Arabic speaking teachers and managers. She reported being struck by the seriousness of the TTC's expatriate employees, who contrasted with those she met in her school-based experiences: "Yeah. I see the foreign. First time I went - I sit with foreign - like teachers, the administrators, how they communicate. I seem - they are more serious ... [than] in schools" (II8, 532-533). Thus, the participants encountered a range of models of educated English speech, and a different manner of communication and professionalism. As such, the Foundations teachers reflected a range of linguistic and cultural identities, both native and non-native English-speakers, as well as Muslims and non-Muslims. In this sense, the identities of TTC teachers do not mesh with prevailing descriptions of English teachers in the Gulf in terms of discriminatory hiring practices based on skin colour or appearance (Ali, 2009; Karmani, 2005c).

The participants offered little information about the quality of the language used. Instead emphasis on orienting to new academic criteria and measurements of linguistic proficiency dominated. Several participants credited Foundations as an appropriate programme for helping them to disconnect from lower expectations of achievement in prior schooling and to engage with more rigorous, productive tasks, such as oral presentations and reflective writing. This programme featured a full-time, daily curriculum with lessons on the mechanics of English through reading, writing, speaking and listening activities. While the curriculum supported many aspects of Communicative Language Teaching methodology, the teaching practices also reflected a test-taking focus where English language skill development was routinely evaluated by in-house proxy assessments of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). For some participants, the focus of this phase was on achieving desired results of Band 5 on the

IELTS examinations, out-sourced to the British Council. As such, this phase of learning English signifies a focus on individual mastery of English for academic purposes.

The participants' accounts show that they embraced the aim of learning in an English-medium environment. For AY, entering Foundations was a period of great excitement. The extract below conveys her enthusiasm for developing productive skills in English among a classroom community of peers:

I was excited because I'm going to talk! Finally, I'm going to talk! It was – Ah – because, you know, we – we feel - I felt that maybe someone will laugh on me. But that - that feeling was not there because when I come into the Foundation. Everyone is the same! No one is – ah - excellent than anyone! We are the same. The teacher is dealing with us as we are the same! She don't laugh on us (p) ah - when we do mistake! (II5, 562-566)

Here, AY's words echoes GA's previous comments in emphasising that nobody laughed at her. Instead, she received helpful feedback from her teachers, which encouraged her even though she achieved poor letter grades, as shown in the following extract: "When I reviewed my Foundation paper, there are lots of mistake! (p) But I had one draft. One draft, two draft, 'til five, maybe six drafts but - ah – and – uh - I got the C, D, E, F but (p) the teacher is supportive. 'You can do it. You are not bad. You can do it'. (II5, 567-569). As such, an implicit message AY heard from her teacher was that individual development depended on her consistent effort over a period of time. Subsequently, in reflecting back on the quality of her writing produced during that phase, AY acknowledged how full of mistakes her writing was then. Accordingly, it appears that awareness of error-laden speech and writing emerge as characteristics of Learner English.

From some participants' accounts, I deduced that using English in this way was a time-bound phase, but for others, it was a life-long stage. For instance, for AY and HM, learning English is an intensive phase with an exclusive focus on achieving a threshold of academic English proficiency to enable participation for EMI classrooms. HM suggested she has surpassed this stage when reflecting on her self-consciousness about making mistakes during this period. In her words, she recounted that: "back then I felt like, 'No, I can't say this.' Ah - I'm afraid that I will make mistakes or something." (II9, 683-4) In contrast to HM, AM positioned herself as an English learner forever, as evident when she said, "Because this is NOT our language. We will - until - until we die, we will - we will keep - keep learning English because not - it's NOT OUR language." (FG3, 635-6). In this extract, AM identified herself as a life-long learner of English, which meant English was the language of others. Accordingly, the boundaries around Learner English are subjective and fluid. For some, this phase of learning English does not necessarily end with the required IELTS score granting entry in the B.Ed. programme.

Several participants emphasised how this phase of learning English contrasted with prior experiences learning English as a foreign language. SR characterised the change in approach as "more serious" (II2, 326) while AY criticised her previous English education in primary school, describing its focus on learning vocabulary as weak and ineffectual. According to AY, her experiences with this kind of English began in high-school when speaking became the focus, which, ultimately, helped her to speak well in college, as exemplified in the extract below:

because when I was even a child I - I got - I had a teacher who taught me in Eng - English language but maybe in a very weak - ah - very weak skills, not very high or deep English. We - we had English. We learned English but even maybe in - 'til Grade 6 it was very

weak, like only words, only vocabularies, no more speaking. I didn't speak very well English 'til I come to the college or maybe 'til high school. Let me be more real - honest. (II5, 525-530)

SR had two criticisms of high-school English. One was a reliance on rote-learning and the other was the use of Arabic as a medium of instruction to teach English. In the following extract, SR described her experiences of this methodology:

Uhm, they talk in Arabic. They write everything (*SR giggles*) for us. We just copy. I remembered when we have writing, we have to write a paragraph for the exam. She wrote it for us on the board and we copied and we just memorised it and write it on the – or write it on the exam. (II2, 302-305)

SR's high school teachers allegedly focussed her attention on memorising paragraphs in English for exams, which were explained in Arabic. This approach rendered the English lessons unproductive for her learning. In contrast, in her first year at the college in Foundations, the focus was on draft writing. SR credited the process of writing and rewriting as improving her "a lot" (II2, 327). In addition, this mode was characterised by English-only use, where she reported that strict, male and female, non-Arabic speaking teachers said sternly, "I don't want to listen to any Arabic word." (II2, 340-341) SR, however, was grateful for the English-only rule. She argued that it improved her English skills, as attested in the following claim: "we liked it, *yani*. At that time we feel it's – uhm - difficult, but it improves us, Miss." (II2, 343)

Like SR, AM claimed that the English-only pedagogical approach in Foundations was vital for her readiness the next year for EMI in HE. In the extract below, AM recounted a

dramatic critical incident in which she failed her first attempt at Foundation year. She claimed her bilingual teacher regularly used Arabic in the class. Of note, AM began by narrating the story by addressing me as the listener, but then she took on the voice of the Arabic-using teacher to dramatise her narration. After her first sentence, her tone changed. It seemed that, in recalling the Arabic-speaking teacher in her mind's eye, AM replaced me, as the listener, with her imagined teacher. In so doing, she redirected her appeal for the use of English-only to this "Arabic person." The extract below reveals the emotional tenor of her negative experience, with the words heavily emphasised represented in capital letters:

I'm NOT happy because I will NEVER learn English for – if she is – uhm – 'Okay, I know you are talking - I know you are – ah - Arabic person, but you NEED to talk in English so I can LEARN more this – ah - language because I am here to LEARN English, not Arabic'. [MV: hmm] 'I'm already' [GA: 'know how to – how to talk and'] yeah [EM: 'how to use Arabic'] 'but I HAVE to learn ENGLISH!' (FG3, 381-384)

Her narration engaged EM and GA. They co-constructed responses to AM's sentence-starter, "I'm already" with contributions that conveyed shared sentiments. As illustrated above, they explained that if you already know how to talk in Arabic or use Arabic, then Arabic is not needed for a language of instruction in the Foundation programme. In this sense, for these participants, Arabic as a medium of instruction was conceptualised as a problem where the teacher's reliance on Arabic was a barrier for AM's learning of English. Her teacher's reliance on using Arabic blocked her from progressing to the next stage of her education.

Like SR, AM was also critical of teachers for emphasising memorisation, a learning strategy she had equated with high school experiences. She alleged that her first year experience generated such distress that she returned home crying every day. However, by being given the chance to repeat the programme, AM encountered a different college teacher who contributed to her eventual success. In her words, she described the second year as making her “VERY HAPPY really [...] because I LEARNED the English that I HAVE TO BE taught before [...] because the focus was ONLY in English” (FG3, 709-714). In turn, by learning the appropriate English through the use of English in class, AM became sufficiently readied for using EMI at the college. Hence, she claimed proudly that “the college environment makes you MORE FEELING, (p) ah - I don’t know what to say but FEELING MORE COMFORTABLE with using English” (FG3, 717-719).

Other accounts also testify to the value the participants felt towards an English-only approach. For AM, the monolingual use of English across the four skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in her second preparatory year with different teachers enabled her to learn what was needed. She explained that “words that have MANY LETTERS” (FG3, 774), like ‘globalisation’ and ‘phenomenon’ were daunting at first but she credited this approach for an “easy” (FG3, 776) process of acquiring high-level vocabulary. For FS, this phase of learning English also featured personalised assignments, which differed from the writing and project tasks she later encountered in her B. Ed courses. In the extract below, FS described the productive use of English every day via reading, writing and talking about stories, featured in this phase of learning English:

because we are speaking English everyday in the college and they – we have many presentations when in Foundation, we have many presentations. We don't have like project writing, writing, writing. The most thing that – ah - we use in Foundation was presentation: talking, grammar, story, making a story, talk about the story, reading, story every week. I think I – I remember that we have to – ah – ah - write a reflection about all the story that we read every week. Like every week story, read the story and write reflection what you learned about the story. That's what's helped me. (II6, 693-699)

When using Learner English in the college's Foundations programme, FS was socialised to establish a regular habit of producing, coherent English speech. Reading, recounting stories, reflecting on stories in English, and reflecting on her learning were important learning activities which helped FH to develop productive and receptive skills in English.

Like other participants, FS put a certain emphasis on the qualities of “good” English language teachers and their pedagogical practices. In the extract below, FS seemed at first to commit to a native-speaker model, when referencing me for my pronunciation and teaching experience but, later, her constructions moved to the impact of their English-medium pedagogy on her learning:

FS: I think it's better to – to – ah - have someone to talk to - who's English and talk to you - who taught - and who taught you English - like you - they are know more than the Arabic teachers.

MV: Why is it that?

FS: Their accent

MV: Why do you say that? [FS: Their accent]

FS: Their accent. I think like -

MV: The pronunciation, you mean?

FS: Yeah.

MV: Okay.

FS: Like even what I said sometimes they are changing to Arabic [MV: Okay] but -
ah - it's okay to change Arabic. I'm not criticising them but – [MV: No.] ah - like
using English every day, every day, every day and even your telling the story, you
will get benefit how to recount the story and what the – what the method, what
you can use to recount the story. (II6, 877-888)

Here and elsewhere, FS's iterations of good teachers are fuzzily construed. To qualify, FS expressed that "English" ones are better since they talk to students in English and have taught English, and claimed that these teachers know more than "Arabic" teachers. In addition, she mentioned the importance of "accent," which was left undefined; and, finally, she implied that good teachers use English consistently every day with a vague reference to teaching methods. Yet she also immediately admitted that it was sometimes acceptable to switch to Arabic. She also refrained from defining Arabic and English teachers, rendering it implausible to construe if she associated each label with content of teaching, linguistic profile, national or regional identity, or medium of instruction used.

For FH, many English teachers are forgettable. However, one Foundation teacher, in particular, stood out as excellent due to the quality of her feedback. In the extract below, FH,

took on the voice of her unforgettable teacher, to repeat the advice she heard and convey how it influenced her to become successful:

She said, ‘FH, I know, you are – you make a lot of mistake in these things and when I read your paragraph, you are when I read your paragraph and everything, I - you know, you – you are perfect in like this, and I know these weaknesses, if you – if you try to learn it more and try to practice, practice you will be a perfect like this’. And she give me – ah - tips, how to follow it. [MV: mm] I like – I - I cannot forget her (*FH laughs*) - forever. (II8, 112-115)

FH’s accounts provides vital insight into student perspectives of individualised feedback from the teacher. FH underscores her responsiveness to personal attention, and credits this approach for triggering her development through this particular phase of using Learner English.

From these accounts, some observations can be made about this phase as a learner of English. Firstly, this mode contrasts sharply to Simple English since the teacher is both a role model and a central interactant. Peers were largely absent in most narratives of this phase of learning English. Such conceptions of learning and knowledge have been taken up in research on personal epistemology (Hofer, 2000, 2008). Research on beliefs about ways of knowing of Emirati students from the TTC’s Foundation programme showed instances of connected learning, which included sensitivity towards how others thought and felt, including classmates (Khine & Hayes, 2010). Although the the participants’ viewpoints about teachers and learning experiences were sometimes unclear and changeable, during this phase of learning English, they did not mention collaborating with peers. However, an image of a good teacher emerges as

serving the following roles: a model of English pronunciation; the manager of an English-only environment, or, as some conceded, English-mostly; and, the provider of individually-tailored feedback. Of note, no participants used the label of “native-English speaker” but English and Arabic teacher appear as dichotomous terms. However, teachers appear as either an asset or barrier to learning with some connections made to pedagogical practices and medium of instruction. In addition, the participants did not emphasise linguistic features although they identified that they were aware of their error-laden speech and valued teachers who provided formative feedback.

In writing about pedagogical norms for English language classes in the Philippines and Singapore, Tupas (2012) comments that students are seldomly asked about which models of English they prefer. However, when asked, students often stated their preference for native-speaker models, which, he admits, could be a conditioned response. However, in another study conducted with international students in the UK, Pacek (2005) argues that students ranked personality and attention to students’ needs higher than linguistic performance via pronunciation and explanation with native speaker credentials ranked low leading him to conclude that personality overrides nationality in the eyes of the students. However, in several participants’ accounts, professional knowledge and personalised feedback on ways to improve linguistic skill were desirable for this stage of learning English, as well as an English-only approach. Current scholarship into ELT supports translanguaging practices and disavows a monolingual approach (Llurda, 2016). Yet, as seen in several participants’ accounts the experience of English-only instruction is highly valued, but, as seen in FS’s response, code-switching is a linguistic behaviour she did not want to complain about sharply. Such responses suggest unresolved

tensions between the value of clear linguistic input in English versus the value of understanding clearly using the mother tongue.

6.3.3. Academic English

The participants did not use the expression “English-medium” to designate the way of using English for learning although they referred to English as the main language used at federal institutions (FG1, 585). Instead they described experiences using EMI, which highlighted face-to-face communication in English in a particular register with teachers mainly in the classroom domain at the college. For instance, this mode was a “formal language” (GA, FG3, 332) with “academic words” (SF, FG4, 482-3). AY chose to contrast the way of using English inside the college from other domains outside it, as follows: “it’s more academic - more – ah – (p) more higher - like higher than the English outside the college.” (II5, 83-84) Based on SF and AY’s usage, I offer the label of Academic English to capture their focus on a formal register of English for academic purposes in an English-medium domain.

The purposes of conversational activity in this mode contrasts with that of Simple English and for focussing on needs and wants, and compares to Learner English for emphasising the presence of a teacher in a classroom, regardless of mother-tongue status. However, patterns of social interaction differ. With Learner English, the focus is on individual language skill practice and feedback from the teacher, but, Academic English is for “classroom discussion and presentation” (EQ, FG2, 100). Her account underscores that her experience of EMI pedagogy at the TTC entails student participation via sharing concrete and abstract ideas orally in English where the teacher is a main interactant and source of beneficial knowledge (FG1, 197-198).

While reading and writing academic texts in English is an important feature of the use of EMI internationally, few participants discussed reading and writing. In fact, one participant even suggested that reading in English was a burden for her, when she said, “I don’t have time and it make me bored and I want to sleep” (HD, II3, 729). In contrast, FS suggested that reading and writing were ways to engage with theories encountered in the classroom:

because they don’t just give us the theory, ‘Okay this theory talk about this one you need to go - to – ah – to have – or to make a project about this ap – ah - theory. No! They give us a topic. You choose your topic. And what the suitable theory that you think it will be – suits – which goes with this topic. You need to search. You need to read. You need to write everythings. (II6, 730-734)

A notable counterpoint is FH, who was the sole avid reader interviewed. She attested to the personal benefits of leisure reading and regarded the library as a source of new kinds of knowledge. However, she admitted she was often alone in the library. Also, she was sometimes teased for reading in English by her sister, a fellow TTC student. For FH, selecting English books from the library written by foreign authors offered her the twifold benefits of learning new vocabulary and learning about how foreigners view the world, and, for that matter, how they viewed her world:

One purpose, to learn more about this language, more vocabulary, and knew - to learn new experience from outside - outside of this country, or outside of Arab globe or Asian. ‘Cause I want to learn about foreign people, how they think. That’s it. (497- 499)

Of note, FH referenced books written by foreign authors who wrote about Gulf women in ways that surprised her. FH's account shows that FH felt the perspectives of Gulf women as oppressed were confrontational and judgemental. In the extract below, FH spoke to me yet also seemed to switch at points as if she was addressing the authors of the books she read:

Why they - they said, 'No. Why you are like this? And why are your family do like this?' 'Because it's nor - something normal to us'. But, you know, foreign, (*MV inhales*) they thinking that (p) our family force us. No! It's - they are not force us because we - we saw it's something - it's like routine to us. But when they saw us, they shocked because we are VERY different. There are big gap between US and the foreign because our, you know, our religions, everything different. (II8, 520-528)

In talking back to the foreign authors, FH expressed that through reading she gained insights into how her worldview as an Emirati women differed from the "foreign" perspectives of her social world. Yet she drew no further comparisons to her "foreign" teachers at TTC.

For AY, Academic English meant exposure to discipline-specific vocabulary associated with abstract concepts. She pointed out that "Math and Science Education (p) they have their own English by - because they have their own concepts. Aah - the - the language of the - these two courses are different - entirely different because -at - the English also different" (II5, 381-384). She also distinguished General English courses from English Education ones when saying that, "the General English includes the shopping, includes the hospital, includes using the English everywhere in my daily life." (II5, 386-387) Her description points out that topics related to daily life do not exemplify Academic English. I suggest that AY's description of the kind of

English featured in the General English courses highlight the particular “content areas where the transition to EMI” (Dearden, 2014, p. 3) appear easier.

The focus of descriptions of Academic English primarily drew on patterns of social interaction inside the EMI class. Several accounts describe the teacher engaging the whole group in discussion premised on sharing opinions about the lesson or a societal issue. In SR’s description below, she differentiated the flow of conversation when in the presence of a group of students and when alone with the teacher:

Maybe inside, it will be general with all students, like – ah - open conversation with each other if we discussing something – ah - about the lesson or an issue, *yani*, in the society. *Yani*, it will be more, *yani*, with everybody like, each one can say one sentence but, for example, if I have a meeting with one teacher or if I have a problem it will be more private, I can, I feel maybe, more free to (p) say whatever I want. *Yani*, maybe, sometimes - in some conditions. (II2, 76-80)

In the classroom, SR and other participants reported that student talking time was limited to providing a short response whereas private discussions gave them more opportunity to speak freely at length. This claim matches my participant observations of hallway interactions near classrooms. SR characterised such interactions as English-only. She also described them as bound to the learning environment, but, at times, included intra-curricular events in other parts of the college. As she put it, “We (p) use English for only – ah - with teachers but – ah - *yani*, for studying, asking teachers and – ah - having conversations, meetings - ah – and in some events.”

(II2, 25-26) Similarly, HM characterised conversations with teachers in English as primarily based in the classroom (II1, 510), adding that they could occasionally extend to the hallways.

From my participants observations, I noted that short, infrequent private conversations occurred in offices and hallways with non-teaching managers and administrators also. On these occasions, the topics of conversations appeared purposeful. They addressed administrative or regulative matters, such as attendance problems. When Academic English was used outside the classroom, the participants said it was mainly limited to email communication for event planning, some minor research activities in the library with the English-speaking librarian (HD, II1, 341) and, to complete administrative tasks with non-Arabic speakers, such as managing attendance. However, the participants mainly focussed on hallway interactions with teachers in their accounts. HM reported that they included brief greetings or “questions about – ah - projects or assignments” (II9, 60). According to HM, the conversations last “maybe two minutes” (II9, 68) because “everyone is in a rush they have classes or something” (II9, 185-186). Of note, MM also referred to a limited amount of available time for talking to her teachers in English. She assessed this to be about ten percent of the class time (II10, 458). Similarly, HD confirmed that she had limited contact with her teachers, when she said: “Yeah, we don’t communicate much with our teachers - only if we need something.” (II1, 402)

Given the attention to quality and frequency of interactions with teachers, some comparison of the participants’ descriptions of their teachers to descriptions appearing in the EMI literature involving EMI teachers in UAE-based research papers is warranted. For instance, McLaren (2011) distinguished English language teachers from content teachers, labelling the former as “native-English speakers”, and the latter as “non-native English speakers” but made no

no reference to their English-medium teaching credentials. In addition, he offered no assessment of the amount of interaction UAE students had with these two kinds of teachers. At the TTC, content teachers use EMI, and like Foundation teachers, they hail from many regions of the world. Most have postgraduate degrees from English-dominant countries yet those born outside such nations must provide IELTS certificates attesting to high levels of English proficiency.

Like international reports, many TTC teachers are not native speakers of English. In addition, all lack of standardised credentials for EMI pedagogy (Dearden, 2014) as certification in English-medium teaching is not available in the region. However, unlike concerns raised internationally, TTC teachers meet standardised requirements of English competence. These contextual details help interpret the participants' lack of reference to native and non-native distinctions and their reliance on linguistic status in Arabic and subject taught as descriptive criteria for their teachers. According to MM, those teachers who "speak bilingual Arabic and English [... are] more effective to me" (II10, 320-321). FS recognised two types of teachers at the college, and first suggested that she preferred her General English classes to be taught by an "English" teacher. However, when it came to her content courses, she expressed that the "Arabic teachers" were of equal value, as shown in the following extract:

there is no - there is a different but – ah - because they know how - they know – they are Arabic teachers who know how to speak English, like, they are - they have a good accent and they have a good language and grammar so that we - we can, like, trust them and, like, we can learn the same as what we learn – with the – ah – local English teachers. (II6, 872-875)

Elsewhere, when stating preferences for particular English-medium teachers, slow speed of delivery and measured manner of articulation informed several participants' rationales. However, no participants ranked teachers as better or worse in terms of nationality. As summed up by SR, she casts her TTC teachers into a respected professional group of English users, whom she values because they are professional and prepare "everything for us" (II2, 428).

In spite of references to limited talking time in the classroom and limited contact with teachers, participants evaluated their experiences using EMI at the college positively. For instance, it was "perfect or fabulous" (HD, II1, 372), "beneficial" (AM, FG3, 690), "reasonable" (KH, II4, 507), "good" (FS, II6, 728) and "helpful" (HM, II9, 327). While there were no negative reports about the use of English for learning, EQ, complained about the gate-keeping effects of the required IELTS score of 6.5. and a neglect of Standard Arabic in the TTC curriculum. FD echoed these concerns as did others. For several participants, the EMI experience at TTC was an asset to their careers but the ADEA's reliance on an external measurement of academic proficiency in English was a problem. For SF and FM, the IELTS was an obstacle because it did not measure teaching capacity (FG4, 452-453). Subsequently, FM stated her views more strongly. In the extract below, capital letters are used to show her emphasis.

You cannot judge the person who is – ah - beside you if he are good speaker or he have - or if he is – ah - [HM: good teacher] a good teacher or even if he can speak English and reading or writing or English. You - you must - ah – OBSERVE. THEN you can judge. You CANNOT – ah - the four years that we studied English, the IELTS – it is the – ah – decision. It's not fair. [SF: yeah] We already studied four years English and one exam it – it will - it would be end of all that four years. (FG4, 456-461)

When asked pointedly if the practices of using EMI at TTC were or were not beneficial, SF and FM were positive. Similarly, HD defended her English-medium experiences at TTC. In the following passage, HD claimed that the reason was through the use of EMI she gained access to the correct way to phrase questions:

No, no, it has helped us! Yeah, because sometimes, [...] I learn how to say the question. Maybe I can - I couldn't say it before – um - for example, what is the correct way to say: 'How much something is?' Or 'how many something is?' That's a simple question but – ah - when I hear someone saying this before, I can remember it, I can - yeah, someone said 'oh - How much for water? We cannot say 'How many water do we have?' or 'How much water do we have?' (II1, 600-605)

HD's explanation illuminates satisfaction with the acquisition of useful phrases and questions in English while learning in English, a complex process which Dearden (2014) concludes is an urgent area of further study in EMI research. HD's response highlights that her teachers, as educated users, modelled linguistically correct utterances, even if peripheral to the main lesson.

HD also indicated reconciliation of a further complex issue in Dearden's (2014) report: the value of learning academic subjects in English. For HD, this meant the professional value of EMI. Yet her account deserves further scrutiny for conflicting statements around an outcome of EMI on her bilingualism. For instance, she asserted that "I am good at English and I am good at Arabic as well." (II1,579) Moments earlier, however, she stated that, after five years of learning in English, she no longer thought in Arabic, when saying "Because I think in English; I can't think in Arabic." (II1, 560) While it is possible to be proficient in a language and not think in it,

such statements touch on concerns in the EMI literature base concerning the “psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic effects on students’ home language resulting from EMI” (Dearden, 2014, p. 3). HD’s claims also confirm fears in the UAE literature of subtractive bilingualism, in which greater use of one language means less of another (Gallagher, 2011) since she suggested that years of experiencing EMI had taken away thinking time in Arabic. Furthermore, she claimed the mental transformation had also happened to the whole group, when stating, “We think in English. We think how, not in Arabic” (II1, 558)

Yet despite this admission of negative effects on Arabic, she was not unhappy with this development. Rather she insisted she was rather happy with the EMI agenda, as seen in her response: “I love that we are studying in English because – ah - if it was in Arabic, we will not reach – as - as now. Now we are completing the English-medium teachers. So – uhm - I think that’s okay. I think that’s perfect or fabulous.” (II1, 570-572) Here her explanation of happiness with learning in English were based on the professional gains made possible by English-medium education. In short, for HD, the use of EMI at the college was an asset: it allowed her to attain the professional status as an Emirati educator.

However, HD also displays conflicting stances towards norm-dependant models. In the following extract, she specified that, as a native-speaker, I was a model for her but an Indian speaker of English was not: “Because English is your mother language. I don’t pay attention to Indian who is speaking English. (II3, 519-520) Yet, later, she subsequently modified this stance when saying that it was sufficient to communicate and be understood, as noted in the following extract: “because we are learning and you saw us speaking in English and (*HD giggles*) you

understand us and that is fair enough.” (II1, 584-585). These iterations suggest that she has clear ideas about sources of accurate models of English but her own aims are for intelligible output.

Furthermore, HD’s account offers insights into linguistic variation and code-switching. Early in the interview, a female cleaner and then a male cleaner knocked on the interview room’s door during a phase of the interview when HD was talking about how she used English at home. A careful rereading of the transcript reveals HD’s capacity to switch register and modify her communication style as she addresses different interactants. It also shows a moment of confusion as she shifted languages and registers (See Appendix K: Transcript extract). The transcript includes her explanation of how she spoke to her mother in Local Arabic with English words about a test. Then she returned to Academic English to proceed with my next questions. In response to an interruption of a female cleaner, HD answered prefunctorily in Simple English, when indicating to the female cleaner that she understood a male would enter. Subsequently, she restarted her explanation to me in Local Arabic, before correcting herself. During this moment, I observed that she adjusted her *shayla* to ensure her hair was fully covered before the male entered. I noted that she kept her back to the man and repeated “yeah” three times to signal it was acceptable that he enter to clean the rubbish bin.

This phase of the interview showed me how HD deftly switched her conversational style to manage each type of communicative encounter. She maintained intelligibility and appropriateness for each interactant. However, in one instance, she used an inappropriate code with me. Although I could understand the meaning of “*enzein*,” she switched language and register to Academic English. As such, this extract documents HD’s performance in a semi-private spaces with several types of English language speakers. Thus, it provides vital empirical

evidence of sociolinguistic dimensions of naturally-occurring communication (Jenks, 2016). It also address themes of mutual intelligibility (Jenkins, 2006; Pickering, 2006; Seidlhofer, 2005), local varieties of English (Boyle, 2011; Fussell, 2011), and translingual practices (Canagarajah, 2012). Further study of extracts like this are invaluable for demonstrating how the participants shift ways of communicating, or, put another way, how mode-switching happens.

This extract also points to gendered dimensions of communication in English. During the interview with HD, a male entered but this incident went without mention. My interview questions to HD about communicating in English among male or female teachers generated little commentary but my own participant observations suggested that gendered norms informing dress, social interaction, and titles of address. In my fieldnotes, gendered differences affected how the students addressed their teachers and how they interacted with them. For instance, TTC students tended to address males as “Sir” and females as “Miss” even though, in most cases, the gender-neutral title, “Dr” was often more appropriate. Other observations include particular female students who elected to veil their faces at TTC in hallways and other spaces where men are present even though there are government mandates not to do so in government institutions. However, classes led by male teachers are known as a grey area yet no participants raised an issue with veiling when talking in English-medium classrooms. I also observed little interaction with male academics or staff in the hallways. In large group settings, such as meetings, led by male managers, I observed that veiling was common. In large meeting rooms, male students in white *dishdashas* were seated at the front in a row and females dressed in black were seated behind them. Many Emirati females veiled in this setting. One way communication of school leaders to students dominated although there were opportunities to address the speakers after the

session. Such patterns of segregation and one way flow of communication illustrate the potential for participant observations to address the quantity and quality of communication in English.

On the topic of belonging to a HEI for male and female students, only one participant openly discussed family and individual orientations to co-educational institutions. FH emphasised that there was limited communication with male students. She also expressed that her brother, who was her legal guardian, accepted her choice of the TTC, since it seemed to be for females only. However, once her brother became aware of the presence of male students, he became uneasy with FH and her sister studying at a co-educational institution. The premise was that males were potential threats. FH explained that she limited communication with males, who constituted a visible minority group. The following extract relays the approach FH takes when discussing how she and her female peers negotiate self-segregation from male students:

So we stay away and like this. We just – we imagine that there – there is no boys in this college. [MV: m] So it's ok. With me, I – I don't mind. With the other girls, they HATE. They just stay at other classroom. 'They want', they said. I said, 'Go outside. They said, 'No. There are boys walking ALL the time around this – the college'. I said, 'Wow - You are waiting for the boys to leave? This is your college also.' She said, 'No. No. I don't want to see - see them also [MV: hm] - even. (II8, 276-280)

FH explained the potential negative ramifications of gossip from other female students when females are suspected of interacting with males. Her peers considered the campus tainted by male presence. They wished there were no men around and imagined a women-only zone. However, FH confessed that she had encountered a male student, who, like her, enjoyed reading

in the library. She explained that she identified with him, yet did not disclose his name or identify if she spoke with him at all there. If communication occurred, a question remains if English or Arabic would be chosen for the interaction. For this reason, gendered-dimensions of communication seems a ripe area of research for the Arab Gulf during the present era of societal transformation. However, it seemed inappropriate to pursue the topic with FH given her emphasis earlier of the grave concerns that talking with male students raised by her guardian brother.

In summary, despite their limited talking time, the participants described the use of EMI at TTC in positive terms. They cited positive experiences with the methodology used at the college, and, the professional utility for EMTs expected to teach using EMI in government schools. For the participants, the use of EMI meant that they spoke in Academic English. This way of speaking occurred in face-to-face communication in English in a particular register with college teachers mainly in classroom settings. Their explanations suggested they appreciated the quality of interaction in English at the college but had some misgivings about their frequency. Although AY pointed to a personal dilemma, when she said: “How my English is improving while I’m talking Arabic most of the times?” (II5, 326-327) Her rhetorical question underscores that a lot of talk at the TTC was not in Academic English.

6.3.4. Simplified English

The participants also identified they used EMI in modified ways when teaching English, math, and science to Emirati children during teaching internships in Abu Dhabi government schools. Their use of EMI then emerges as a language mode, defined by the use of simple words

which break down curricular concepts into language children can understand. According to FM, “You must BREAK IT DOWN! We must make the teaching – ah – simple for the student.” Some participants described that simplifying English was the best way to provide comprehensible input. Accordingly, I use the label Simplified English to highlight the participants’ active role in rendering academic content easier to grasp. Unlike Simple English, this label conveys that the language is modified for children who are learning English as they learn content. EQ summarised her approach to simplified English, as follows: “the basic thing, *yani*, my language is very simple that can matches their level. I try my best that they can understand from my language: English language.” (II3, 90-91)

EQ reported success in teaching the children although she experienced some struggle with vocabulary from the science curriculum, which she calls “difficult terminologies” (II3, 81). Her examples were “windmill” and “kinetic” and “potential energy.” In the extract below, she explained when she first noticed that she had to simplify English, and then exemplified how she simplified her language to ensure the concept was clear:

From the first week when we, *yani*, I teach – uh - I noticed some, like some (p) ways that the students need to be simplified in language. For example, in math, like dividing and [?erase. Erase?], this one difficult for them. Like I – I told them to put it in lines instead of [?erase?], - ah – brainstorming, for example. I – I give them the – the terminology. This is a ‘brainstorm’ but I say – I said to them this is a ‘Thinking Step’, that you are thinking. Ah (II3, 100-104)

EQ suggested that she managed to keep the instruction in English only by simplifying the language she used. In the extract below, she describes the feedback she received from parents, who confirmed that this approach worked for their children:

Ah - English. English. I give them the definition first, *yani*, for example, ‘brainstorm’ and then I tell them but this is - we call it also ‘thinking page’ or ‘ thinking process’ , ‘thinking step’. *Yani*, I try – I tried to use simple language for them that they can understand from me. And I see really positive (p) feedbacks from parents. They come at school and they said, ‘Now, we understand - our children they are understanding more from you. ‘Why? What is the reason?’ I said, ‘Maybe because it’s my simple English language’. Yeah. So and we already know, *yani*, because our, *yani*, (p) they are our children, *yani*, (*EQ laughs*) our children – our UAE children so we know their needs. We know exactly what do they need for the English language. (II3, 111-114)

EQ attributed her special insights into the language needs of the students she encountered in Practicum to being an Emirati teacher who has gone through the English-learning process herself. She claimed this experience helped her recognise the impact that the use of EMI by Emirati teachers with Emirati youth can have. In this sense, EQ’s account is emblematic of the agency local educators take when interpreting mandates for EMI, and managing societal bilingualism. This theme of local educators is well-recognised in the ELT literature and discussed in terms of macro-acquisition processes as well as the individual level of positive and insightful pedagogy (Brutt-Griffler, 2002; Canagarajah, 1999; Holliday, 2002, 2006; Llurda, 2016; Medgyes, 1992; Pacek, 2005). The EMI literature, however, highlights the constraints on

local educators as they contend with top-down policies, lack of resources and lack of adequate professional development (Coleman, 2006; Dearden, 2014).

Like EQ, KH referred to her input as “simple language.” However, KH conveyed that Simplified English is an informal mode that involves student interaction in Local Arabic with English words or half Arabic-half English. In this dynamic, she did not check or correct the grammar of the students’ utterances since the focus for students is on comprehension of main concepts and the teacher’s relative intelligibility (II4 28-29). She also explained certain concepts like “potential kinetic energy” were hard for them to pronounce (II3, 634-636). Accordingly, KH reported switching to Local Arabic when needed. Similarly, HD resorted to teaching in English followed by translating into Arabic and vice versa, which she described as “half of this, half of this. I speak English, I say something in English, then I translate it in Arabic then I come back to English.” (II1, 145-146) HD explained that her native-English speaking co-teacher in the Practicum was also supportive of her code-switching practices, particularly when modelling science experiments involving making predictions (II1, 148-153).

Although EQ said she used English only, other participants openly credited Local Arabic as a resource. KH and HD suggested code-switching was a resource they used for teaching in English. HD claimed that the children asked her to translate. For this reason, she code-switched. She cited that the children said to her, “Ah, Miss, *ter-ji-mi*. Miss, translate.” (II1, 137) KH defended the use of translation on the basis of her students’ observed capacity to handle switching from English to Arabic. She explained her conceptions of the appropriateness of code-switching in light of her surprising discovery that her young students could function as translators between the English-speaking teacher and their parents during Parent-Teacher

interviews. KH's description suggests that her students were emergent bilinguals with observable but uneven skills with their two languages, as exemplified in the following extract:

most of them they are comfortable in English. They even translate the Eng - when we (p) met their parents in the meeting, some of them translate for their parents. That was AMAZING (*KH says with emphasis*) for me. That shocked me. She said and translated for her. Ah, 'The teachers say like this' and 'She mentioned like this', 'She means like this'. (II4, 676-679)

KH's surprise was premised on recognising the sharp differences in academic expectations between the new curriculum she taught and her own primary schooling, as illuminated below:

Before, we - I didn't know any English. I didn't know any words (*MV inhales*) in the high school. For all twelve years, I didn't know anything. My- [MV: Why not?] because we have only simple classes in English, we - I didn't remember anything – anything about the English classes in my primary school, in grade 2, 3. I couldn't remember anything. I think I didn't learn anything when I see now what's happening at schools and the new system, I see the difference. Ah - they, Miss, the new vocabulary and language, I learned – learned it at the college. I didn't learn it in the school, on their age. (II)

KH claimed that the primary school children were learning concepts that she had only recently learned at the college. In sum, KH and HD's discussion of simplifying language for teaching Emirati children in English was framed by several social experiences. These include comparing their earlier phases of education with the cognitive demands on the NSC, sufficient training at the college, and, insights gained while interacting with children while on their teaching

internships. These social experiences informed their readiness and willingness to use this mode of Simplified English in English-medium classes of their own.

In comparison, HM and AY focussed on theoretical preparation at the college to explain their approach to teaching in English. They credited particular courses and hands-on experience teaching Emirati children during Practicum only. HM, however, felt less reliant on simplifying English since she had classroom management skills and well-planned lessons, which helped to ensure students could understand her. Furthermore, she was not ashamed if she made mistakes in English. She pointed out that if her verbal input was not sufficient, she could draw on other visual or physical techniques to teach the children (II9, 673-9). AY argued that TTC courses like “Language Across the Curriculum” recognised her bilingualism. She identified learning appropriate strategies to integrate content and language in that course. However, she desired more relevant teaching practice based on this approach. Of note, AY was critical of the use of EMI for science yet she was satisfied with its use in Math. She was also dissatisfied with the methodology used in Arabic-medium classes in schools. For AY, EMI was a problem for learning about scientific processes, but AMI was a problem for learning because of the methodology associated with AMI.

For other participants, formative experiences with memorable teachers as young students were main rationales in support of learning and teaching in English. FS cited negative associations with Arabic teachers, who allegedly hit students. FS also held positive associations of her English teachers, whom she characterised as verbally encouraging her participation and using engaging and colourful resources. Similarly, FM explained that her positive associations of learning English and learning in English came from a grade 1 Emirati teacher. FM recalled a

profound childhood memory when her Emirati teacher introduced the value of learning a new language called English. The teacher conveyed that Islamic thinking sanctioned learning new languages for promoting intercultural learning and sharing (FG4, 357-361). Religious or faith-based rationales rarely appeared, and, so, FM's account stands out in this regard.

In short, several participants explained that they modified English to suit the linguistic profile of their young emergent bilingual interactants. Simplified English emerges as a particular way that the participants either taught using simple English only or used Arabic as a resource for teaching. One participant said the children asked for translations in Arabic. Another participant also reported that her students showed a remarkable capacity to translate for their monolingual Arabic-speaking parents and monolingual English-speaking teacher. Positive and negative memories from primary schooling also appeared as justifications in support of mandates to teach using EMI.

Summary of the Findings on Linguistic Repertoires

This chapter accounted for 12 modes of discrete conversational patterns which the participants shared in the four focus groups and the 10 individual interviews. Based on the participants' accounts, eight modes show Arabic is the base language and four rely on English. It should be pointed out that one mode, TTC-flavour English, is somewhat ambiguous and deserves further empirical research of naturally-occurring speech samples. Careful reading of the collective accounts led to my synthesis of each pattern of conversational activity as a particular language mode. Arranged as a spectrum from Standard Arabic to the Simplified English, I presented each mode with descriptions of how the participants reported modifying the languages they knew to

suit particular pragmatic purposes and interactants encountered. These included a wide variety of people at the college, within the home and other select domains in Abu Dhabi, which I identify as key social influences. The participants often provided labels for each mode, but when no labels appeared in the transcript, I generated labels based on the salient features which appeared repeatedly in the participants' accounts. In this study, the twelve modes are listed as follows: Standard Arabic; Local Arabic; Local Arabic with English; Local Arabic with Broken Arabic; Local Arabic with Other Varieties of Arabic; Local Arabic with Korean words; Arabish; TTC-flavour English; Simple English; Learner English; Academic English; and Simplified English. Although not all 16 participants reported using these 12 modes, generally speaking, these modes should be seen as familiar and recognisable practices comprising of available linguistic resources nested within dynamic linguistic repertoires.

In the college environment, Arabic and English serve as the two main languages, which can be understood as two base languages (Grosjean, 2001). Both languages are actively used in the English-medium environment at the college but they but serve discrete purposes. Broadly speaking, Arabic modes are used for instructional and social purposes between peers. To qualify, encounters with Standard Arabic is limited to one Arabic language course, where Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is both the medium of instruction and the subject of one course. In this case, the teacher is the central interactant. The participants did not claim to prefer using this mode even though it was valued highly. In fact, they report discomfort when speaking in MSA in the college environment. It is unclear the extent to which Standard Arabic is regarded as the main medium of official communication at the TTC. Further research by Arabic-speaking

linguists is needed to ascertain the specific functions of MSA in this and other English-medium domains in the Arabian Gulf.

Local Arabic is the participants' mother tongue. Local Arabic, also called Emirati Arabic (O'Neill, 2014), is used widely at the college. Local Arabic is the primary means of oral communication among peers at the TTC. Local Arabic is not considered to be a written language although the participants use English letters to help use Local Arabic in short messages. The participants reported that Local Arabic supports a range of robust social and educational purposes both inside and outside the classroom domain. Local Arabic is described as a vital support for learning among peers in the TTC's English-medium environment and an administrative language among Emirati and Arab employees in various types of support services. In addition, Local Arabic is described as a resource for certain hybridising practices. This study documented descriptions of language play and linguistic innovation among peers or other TTC members. To this end, other languages or varieties of Arabic are used as resources to enhance communication. This chapter also provided many insights into ways that Arabic mediates teaching and learning interactions. It also shows that many of such interactions are influenced by the participants' experiences of learning and teaching in an English-medium environment.

Although the college is recognised as an English-medium domain, Academic English is largely limited to classroom environments when the teacher is present. The participants conveyed that fellow students have a minimal amount of talking time in the classroom as other modes are accorded preferential treatment. Nevertheless, positive views of EMI dominate. Positive associations of English are stated in personal terms of professional gains as EMTs. Positive associations are also linked to recognition of their teachers as a professional group who

assist in their socialisation as future teachers. However, the gate-keeping role of the IELTS generated fear that four years of studying to be a good teacher could be undone. In this sense, this language-based assessment was construed as a barrier preventing employment. There were no claims that Arabic should be the medium of instruction although there were wishes expressed for greater recognition of the roles they will need to play as bilinguals who can translate for parents, other teachers, and students in schools.

Emirati pre-service teachers' perspectives of EMI are primarily associated with the use of Academic English in the class among teachers. As a formal mode of English use, teachers at the college, irrespective of the linguistic status, are central to the social experience of this mode. Teachers from a range of countries are important social influences on the correct use of technical terminology underpinning each discipline of study. However, if the teacher is bilingual then code-switches are favourably regarded for enhancing understanding. While code-switching is not contested in the EMI classroom, it is not desired in the stage leading up to academic readiness.

This study also documented conceptions of Learner English, which was described as an important entry-level phase of English learning which precedes the use of Academic English. Learner English then is distinct from Academic English. It represents an exclusive focus on upgrading English proficiency to meet entrance requirements for an English-medium environment. This phase features social interaction with trained English-speaking teachers from a variety of countries. For some participants, it was a temporary phase in which the focus is on eliminating mistakes. For others, Learner English was seen as a lifelong trajectory. For the Learner English mode to be surpassed, some participants stated open support for English-only instruction with vaguely worded preferences for input from teachers with good pronunciation,

good teaching experiences and a supportive approach with productive tasks and individualised feedback.

On the contours of the EMI classroom at the TTC, several other modes of English are present: Simple English and Simplified English. Simple English serves as a default lingua franca at the college. It is associated with use among contractual workers, such as cleaners, technicians, cafeteria staff, who are primarily from South East Asia. This language mode, however, is acquired through social interactions outside the college, such as in Abu Dhabi hospitals and shopping malls. In this sense, social influences from the wider speech community shape understandings of how to communicate in English. Here a simple and clear way of using language is valued for its efficiency in communicating needs and wants with other English users, who may or may not be native-speakers of the language. This way of using English is central to its label as a default lingua franca in Abu Dhabi; however, as noted, in the literature base, other names for this way of using English are given (Fussell, 2011; Randall & Samimi, 2010).

Simplified English is a language mode the participants described as developed through practice among Emirati children. Conceptions of Simplified English are shaped by face-to-face interaction with young Emirati students during Practicum. However, only one course was cited for offering relevant training in managing the task of teaching both content and language. The participants discussed Simplified English as a way of managing this task of teaching language and teaching content. This mode was reported as a means of providing learning input that is comprehensible to those children in Abu Dhabi government schools who they perceived as emergent bilinguals. This mode is an important manifestation of EMI which accounts for the participants' capacities in two languages. Here the content of communication comes from the

NSC but simple language is used. Simplified English then emerges as a way of communicating with children who face challenges with English but, due to educational mandates, are learning to learn in English and Arabic. Local Arabic is viewed as a resource to assist with this aim with various translanguaging patterns suggested. However, the way of using Local Arabic with English is an area warranting further documentation.

In conclusion, the findings in this chapter presented Emirati pre-service teachers' conceptions of English in light of its daily use as a medium on instruction, and the social influences they reported at play. It answered the first research question by offering many names and labels the participants accorded with each way of communicating. It also detailed key interactants, which the participants shared as impactful on the form and manner in which each language was used. The participants reported interpreting the linguistic profile of interactants from inside the college domain and on its peripheries, such as schools in Abu Dhabi. The participants accounted for face-to-face interactions as an important kind of social influence; however, some indirect influences via television broadcasts and downloadable films appeared as minor social influences. The participants offered a range of names for English users, which included Emiratis. It should be pointed out that English use among Emiratis was often reported as hybridised. In addition, the findings shed light on a range of hybrid modes that include varieties of Arabic. According to Gallagher (2011), there is insufficient research addressing how Emirati student manage diglossic conditions of learning MSA while speaking Local Arabic and learning English. As such, the findings offer important insights into how the participants made sense of heterogeneous experiences with Arabic and English. This study reported on the many

different patterns of using some English in the home, speaking English in public, learning English at the college, learning in English and teaching in English.

As such, the findings draw attention to the hybridised ways the participants reported using English and Arabic. These ways of using language were often reported as integrated as a communicative resource. The participants reported mixing Local Arabic with English and other linguistic influences. This study documented Local Arabic with English; Local Arabic with other Varieties of Arabic, Local Arabic with Broken Arabic; Local Arabic with Korean words; Arabish, TTC-flavour English and Simplified English. These patterns highlight Emirati pre-service teachers' responsiveness to the linguistic status of the interactants. Their accounts also show that linguistic innovations are evident, particularly with TTC-flavour English. In sum, these findings offer a number of insightful descriptions of conceptions of English and key social influences. It also shows that Arabic is conceptualised as a resource in this English-medium environment in Abu Dhabi.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7. LINGUISTIC AWARENESS

Like chapter six, chapter seven presents the findings generated from four ethnographic focus groups (FG), 66 field notes and 10 individual interviews (II). However, in response to the research questions (conceptions of English and social influences shaping conceptions of English), this chapter hones in on perspectives of the place of English in Abu Dhabi. The chapter refers to - and builds on - insights from the preliminary study (PS) data pertaining to rich social experiences. It also expands from a frame of reference of individual repertoires developed in chapter six as a set of responses to its use as a medium of instruction at the TTC. In so doing, it offers a description of the “sociolinguistic realities” (Pakir, 2009, p. 224) that shed light on how the participants conceptualise the place of English within Abu Dhabi as a linguistic ecology. Accordingly, this chapter presents findings showing the participants cast themselves as members of a wider speech community.

Like the previous chapter, this chapter integrates answers to the first and second research questions. While chapter six reported on conceptions of English framed by its place in individual linguistic repertoires with a focus on teaching and learning interactions, this chapter uses the frame of linguistic awareness in Abu Dhabi. I organised the findings this way so as to stimulate fresh ways of thinking about the perspectives of Emirati pre-service teachers towards the use of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) when cast against the emergence of societal bilingualism in Abu Dhabi. This way of organising the findings allowed sense-making of the labels and metaphors of English featured in chapter six and better illustrates perspectives of the

use of English in education from the vantage of the 16 participants as key stakeholders in their capacity as future English-medium teachers (EMTs) rather than as TTC students.

Accordingly, this chapter widens the frame and focuses on responses generated from my questions about languages experienced in daily life. While chapter six highlighted heterogeneous social experiences, this chapter presents findings which tease out conceptions of English as a homogeneous entity. In other words, I share themes showing conceptions of English when set against configurations of Arabic and other languages used in the Abu Dhabi speech community. This organisation of the findings presents labels of English and social influences from the frame of a language community. Throughout this chapter, I discuss how these findings converge or diverge from the literature base, and how these findings answer my research questions.

7.1. Linguistic awareness in Abu Dhabi

This section presents insightful descriptions concerning the position of English in Abu Dhabi, a social context hosting the use of many languages. According to Hammersley (1992), descriptive claims refer to statements about phenomena which occur at a particular time and place. As such, this section attends to the participants' descriptions of languages they reported experiencing during a particular time in Abu Dhabi history. My focus is on their descriptions of English, Arabic, and other languages they said they experienced. It also includes salient features of each language. The findings in this section address gaps in descriptive accounts of the "current sociolinguistic landscape" (Matsuda, 2012, p. 4), necessary for English language teaching (ELT) programming, and for coming to terms with the sociolinguistic dimensions of language use in an Arabic-speaking and Islamic region (Charise, 2007). This section then focuses on the

participants' accounts of the place of English in respect to other languages in their speech community, and serves to challenge claims of linguistic dualism. By highlighting the participants' rich experiences with a range of languages, this chapter, ultimately, serves to offer further insights into the place of English and the key social influences resting within Abu Dhabi's broader community.

7.2. Challenges to linguistic dualism

As found in the PS, the main study also showed that the participants regarded Abu Dhabi as a linguistic environment that supports the daily use of two main languages: Arabic and English. Arabic is for use among a broadly-construed in-group of Arabic speakers; whereas, English is for international and intra-national communication with out-group foreigners who cannot speak Arabic. However, this study contrasted with the PS by putting greater emphasis on the participants' dynamic orientations to English and Arabic as languages which can be differentiated according to social rank or prestige. As AY put it, "I use two languages. For example, when - if there are Arabic people, I will talk to them in Arabic. But in – with the English people or people who do not have Arabic language, I have to use – to use English because it's the second popular language in the UAE." (II5, 47-50) When describing daily habits, SR replied that "most of the time it's Arabic because it's our language" (FG4, 209).

Often the participants ranked Arabic as first and English as an important second. As seen in SR's statement, she ranked English as second in relative status to Arabic: "First thing, Arabic – as – ah - my own language, my mother language. The second is English and I think it's important in Abu Dhabi" (II2, 22-3). Statements of this kind suggest the continued relevance of

Findlow's (2006) claim of linguistic dualism, where Arabic and English are regarded as the two main languages. However, by showing these languages are ranked in importance based on social value, these statements encourage a careful reassessment of linguistic dualism as originally posed. Other statements show that Arabic takes first place in the minds of participants. HD summed up this stance by saying: "we prefer [...] Arabic than English" (FG2, 36).

However, the findings that follow report on the participants' perspectives of the sociolinguistic landscape of Abu Dhabi as a multilingual one. In the rest of the chapter, I highlight accounts which show conceptions of English as belonging to the local speech environment along with other languages. As such, the findings extend Findlow's (2006) dual language frame by building a case that the negotiated use of English and Arabic among HE students not only allows them "to tap into bilingual resources" (p. 33) but also their multilingual experiences. I also argue that other languages mediate the participants' conceptions of English as a resource.

7.2.1. Conceptions of Arabic

I observed that it was not often possible for participants to explain what English means without reference to Arabic. The participants relied on understandings of Arabic as a homogeneous entity with heterogeneous social experiences and as a language which belongs to them to explain what English is and is not. For instance, when referring to Arabic, conceptions of homogeneity were insufficient for explaining daily practices. The participants used conceptions of Arabic's heterogeneity to explain their understandings of varieties of English, as indicated when AM explained: "the Arabic are - is divided into several languages also!" (FG3, 129).

As mentioned in chapter three, awareness of linguistic variation among PS participants led me to seek greater specificity when conducting the main study. As a result, I accessed a range of labels and descriptions for various languages they experienced. In the extract below, KH explained Arabic diglossia to me as: “it’s not the same language like we have like formal language, formal Arabic, like Classic Arabic, and we have like our slang, like the slang, our language. So it’s not – ah - typical - the same. It’s different.” (II4, 56-58) Her statement exposes conceptions of Arabic as a base language which gives rise to several ways of using Arabic arranged by cline of formality. Such understandings of Arabic are considered important sociocultural information for English language teachers (Syed, 2003) but a lack of empirical research on conditions of Arabic diglossia and its impact on biliteracy (Gallagher, 2011) hampers teachers in this context, who are keen on establishing meaningful expectations and outcomes for academic literacy in higher education (HE).

The participants reported accessing many kinds of Arabic in daily life but their Arabic was the kind they spoke amongst each other. According to KH, using formal Arabic, which she called “Classic Arabic” made her feel uncomfortable: “When I talk in (p) the Emirati language, I feel more comfort - able. It’s easier for me but I found it hard when I talk in Classic Arabic. Like maybe I didn’t get it (p) correctly. Like this.” (II4, 277-278). At first glance, KH’s words confirm fears that the variety of Arabic, known as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), is under threat (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011). AM and GA also indicated that the kind of Arabic spoken in their homes differs from MSA. The extract below offers details on their understandings of how Arabic varies:

AM: For example, Emirati - Emirati people [GA: different accents], different from - ah - for example, Bahraini. (p) [MV: Okay] Different from Egyptian. [MV: Okay] Different from Syria. [GA: Morocco] Yeah, they are different. [GA: m] Even if they Arab, but they use the - different languages while compu - communicating in their - And in EACH country you may found – ah - more than – ah - three or four accents of using Arabic.

GA: Even in the UAE, [AM: Yeah] - ah - for example, in Sharjah their accent are different [AM: different from the Abu Dhabi people] from Abu Dhabi and different from Al Ain.

MV: Why is that? (p) (*GA laughs*)

AM: Maybe because of the -

GA: Difference of the [EM: tribes] yeah tribes [AM: hmm] (FG3, 131-141)

AM and GA first classified Arabic into national patterns and then quickly added that variation occurs within a country too. By using national constructs to classify different varieties of Arabic by accents, AM was able to differentiate Emirati accents from Bahraini, Moroccan or Egyptian accents. When accounting for linguistic variation within the UAE, GA posited that emirate-level differences were due to tribal affiliations.

These participants also tuned me into the salience of the label, Emirati Arabic (O'Neill, 2014), also called “Emirati accent” (IM, II3, 32), “the Emirati language” (KH, II4, 66) “local” and “local Arabic,” which pointed to inadequate use of “Arabic” in the literature as the language Emiratis speak. Furthermore, FG participants rejected my use of the regional label, “Gulf Arabic” in Arabic, “*Khaleeji Arabiya*,” even though I read it was the dialect of the Arabian Gulf

(Davidson, 2009). The participants pointed out this label as I said it in Arabic was not a suitable description for their way of talking (FG3, 165-171). This finding should be further examined as elsewhere a participant curiously used “Gulf Arabic” in English to contrast how her way of speaking from that of her Syrian-Arabic teacher at the college.

Recently, Gallagher (2011) addressed some challenges of biliteracy, including conditions of Arabic diglossia on mastery issues of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). Like others, she identifies Arabic diglossia in terms of three registers: a vernacular Gulf Arabic, MSA (also known as *fus’ha*) and Classical Arabic. However, the participants suggested that distinctions between MSA and Classical Arabic were blurred. For instance, KH explained that “Arabic classic is like more formal. We only see it *Quran*, in - ah - TV sometimes, like the news, or something. Also we can’t – we cannot, we didn’t use it in our life - and books when we read the Arabic books” (II3, 112-114).

Gallagher (2011) also suggests that the challenges English presents Emirati young learners are due to sharp contrasts of differences in scripts between English and Arabic, including directionality of reading. In addition, she has suggested that phonological differences are troublesome. For instance, English vowels are critical for English spelling yet are not displayed in written Arabic. The participants, however, did not raise linguistic differences as barriers to learning English. Interest in contrastive analysis of English and Arabic grammars is not prevalent in ELT literature from the Gulf (Syed, 2003), although, more recently, O’Neill (2014) acknowledges Emirati Arabic as a research interest, suggesting that research investigating the relationship of literacy in Arabic under conditions of Arabic diglossia is to come. Further

research into how Emirati bilinguals read and write in Arabic and English is thus set to generate important insights for ELT in this context.

Sensitivity to Arabic diglossia, however, did not preclude the participants from conceptualising Arabic as a homogeneous entity of regional and international significance. For instance, several participants identified Arabic as a major lingua franca for a large population of Arab users (AY, II5, 130-131, 140-141) and a language, which characterises membership to a pan-regional category of Arabs, which included Emiratis (KH, FG2, 35). One participant used the homogeneity of Arabic to highlight its historical importance as a medium of instruction (NF, FG1, 501-503).

However, the value of Arabic extended beyond its functional roles as a lingua franca and medium of instruction. The participants explained that Arabic differed from English in social importance. For instance, AL identified Arabic's preeminent role in accessing the teachings of the prophet Mohammed and his followers (FG1, 436-7). As AL put it, "it's our culture, it's our religion" (FG1, 429) but this particular conception was not used to associate English with other religions. In deliberating how English and Arabic compared, FG1 participants began with the conception of Arabic as a resource. In spite of interruptions from her peers (which have been removed and replaced with [...]), EM cogently explained that Arabic was more than a resource since it was a part of them:

The Arabic language is part of us so we can't communicate - we can't do anything without it. [...] For example, if I want to discuss - or if I want to talk with my little brother, (p) I would talk with h - with him in Arabic, [...] not in English. So it will be -

not a tool [...] not a tool or a simple tool or, or - uhm (pp) *yani* (p) not main tool - it will be main tool - or - it's part of us! We can't – we can't separate us from Arabic but we can separate us [...] from English. (FG1, 441-446)

Once EM found a way to subordinate the importance of English to Arabic, she was satisfied describing English and Arabic as tools. In so doing, it is possible to use EM's account to locate confidence in the vitality of Arabic as a language she and other Emiratis embody. Although Gallagher (2011) describes Arabic as the lifeblood for the region, the vitality of Local Arabic as an embodied language is not adequately theorised in the regional literature base.

In sum, from the participants' accounts of languages used in the Abu Dhabi speech community, Arabic ranked first place as a lingua franca which ascribes pan-national membership. Conceptions of Arabic as a tool and an embodied language appeared, indicating its social utility and role in marking identity. Awareness of how different speakers use Arabic was also prevalent in the participants' accounts but in ways that showed they held robust bonds to their own spoken variety of Arabic. Discomfort with using MSA suggests urgent attention to literacy practices and strategies for managing Arabic diglossia is needed particularly as pertaining to vernacular and standard varieties. It should be pointed out that the participants did not openly attribute discomfort with MSA to English or their willingness to use English for learning. Instead they claimed they experienced a lack of authentic communication in MSA in daily life. Such perspectives suggest further research is needed to examine the prominence of MSA and other Arabic varieties within HE in the UAE and the wider region.

7.2.2. *Conceptions of English*

Listening carefully to the participants' accounts of the place of Arabic in their lives helped to make sense of their conceptions of English. Like Arabic, the participants described English as a homogeneous conceptual entity, an important language for the UAE, and a language with degrees of heterogeneity. The participants in the main study, unlike PS participants, provided several labels for English which accounted for its homogeneity. For instance, I heard various participants describe English as “a global language” (NF, FG1, 486; KH, FG2, 88) and an “an international language” (IM, FG2, 87-8, 222; SF, FG4, 188). Such labels showcased its monolithic status and global relevance. These labels appeared when the participants justified interest in this language from the perspective of global citizens, but they differed in tone and quality when explaining what the participants did with English as a spoken language. At other times, descriptions of English referenced salient characteristics pertaining to its social value. Some examples include “English is international” (HD, II9, 893) and English is “an economic language also” (NF, FG1, 505).

When use in Abu Dhabi was central, iterations of English as a default lingua appeared. As HM emphasised, “It’s a WAY to communicate with people who cannot speak Arabic (FG4, 180). To this comment, FM added: “Yes because here all the people now speak – ah - English, even if he didn’t speak Arabic, or maybe he’s from another country, Italy or French, but he know how to speak English” (FG4, 183). Such statements convey positive associations based on communicating interculturally with non-Arabic speakers in Abu Dhabi. However, the value of English was confined to the city of Abu Dhabi and its suburbs were not included. The rural areas, such as the Western Region of Abu Dhabi emirate, known in Arabic as *al Gharbiya*. As

EM put it, “in *Al Gharbiya* I will not use the English language as much as now because here, *Shamkha*, it’s near to Abu Dhabi [...] and Abu Dhabi is the CITY of the UAE so it’s full of nationalities” (II7, 932-947). In contrast to Abu Dhabi city, *al Gharbiya* is “three quarters Emirati people while the quarter mixed of Indian” (II7, 960). Like EQ, FS also from the Western Region, pointed out the limited use of English in this part of the emirate given its population dynamics.

As shown, the ranking of English in relation to Arabic varied by frames of reference the participants took. Although it was the second choice from the vantage of Abu Dhabi, when viewing the issue from the Western Region of Abu Dhabi emirate, it had little value since Arabic serves as the main lingua franca among the majority of Emiratis and Indians who live and work there. When the participants used a global frame of reference as English-user, English took first place. According to AY, “English is the first. Arabic is the second or the third. Now Chinese becoming like third” (FG1, 488-489). AY offered English, Arabic and Chinese as top-ranking. Although she did not specify the reason for her classification, it seemed she referred to the total numbers of speakers of that language.

When referencing late or partial acquisition due to schooling, English also ranked lower than Arabic. Its secondary status is identified by EQ, who stated: “the second language, the target language [HD: yeah] which is the English language” (FG2, 325-326). KH also used degree of acquisition and comfort of use to position English second, as shown in her following statement: “Of course, the Emirati language become first. I become comfortable to use it. But then it’s the English and after that the Classic Arabic.” (II4, 289-290) Her statement is notable for placing English between her variety of Arabic and “Classic Arabic”.

Similar to Arabic, heterogeneity marked social experiences using English in public domains. The participants in the main study, unlike the PS participants, did not readily provide varietal distinctions. On the strength of the PS data, I reported that Egyptian English, Indian English, British English or American English were four labels generated from interaction with expatriate groups in Abu Dhabi (van den Hoven, 2014b). However, in the main study, I avoided direct questions about varieties. Nevertheless, two participants used these labels to refer to phonological variation for Egyptian English, American and British English and body language for Indian English speakers (AM, FG1, 218-220). In addition, FS distinguished British English from American English in terms of type of cultural content accessible via Dubai and Saudi Arabian television programming (FS, II6, 301-385). The overall lack of prominence of these labels within the entire corpus indicates an awareness of these constructs of English language varieties, which are favoured in World English discourses, but suggests their limited explanatory relevance.

Nevertheless, in the main study, face-to-face interaction among expatriate residents in the UAE informed designations. One contribution then from the main study is the participants' sensitivity to linguistic proficiency in Arabic to classify interactants. Related to this, participants rarely referenced English native-speaker or non-native speaker dichotomies, which, though prevalent in the ELT literature base, are increasingly problematised as a construct (Braine, 2013; Galloway & Rose, 2015; Holliday, 2002, 2006; Medgyes, 1992). Yet conceptions of native-speaker proficiency in English and Arabic were not entirely absent. For instance, in the extract below, HD cast teachers from the United States, Canada and England as "foreign". However, her

classifications of “foreign teachers” seem to be based on determinations of native-speaker status in Arabic, as indicated in the extract below:

MV: So who are the foreign teachers?

HD: Like - ah - from U.S, England, Canada.

MV: So, what do you mean by foreign teachers?

HD: That they don’t speak Arabic. (*HD laughs*)

MV: Okay, so who are the non-foreign teachers?

HD: Non-foreign teachers? Arabic speakers! (*HD laughs*) (II9, 45-50)

HD explained that her linguistic choices at the college were based on whether or not her teachers were Arabic-speakers or foreign.

HD subsequently explained her choice of language according to their linguistic profile. She said: “we are using each language to - to suitable people to fit their language” (FG1, 74-74). Like HD, EQ classified people as “Arabic or foreign people” (II3, 203). Similarly, FH specified that foreign included Canadian and American but excluded “Sudanese, Egyptian, Tunesian and everything from – ah – from Arabic” (II8, 60-61). AY also referred to interactants by linguistic profile as “Arabic people ...[or] English people” (II5, 47-48). Although one participant reported her decisions on “the nationality of the person” (MM, II10, 828) when deciding when to use English or Arabic, many other participants suggested that assessments of linguistic profile, namely proficiency in Arabic, led to classifying people they met in Abu Dhabi as either “Arabic” or non-Arabic.

In sum, the participants' descriptions of English and Arabic provided insightful themes which differed in tone and quality from those presented in chapter two. In the literature, English and Arabic are presented as oppositional (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011; Belhiah & Elhami, 2015; Dahan, 2007; Karmani, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c; Pennington, 2014a; Syed, 2003; Troudi & Jendli, 2011). In contrast, my findings show that Arabic was an essential point of reference for explaining perspectives of English. The ranking of the value of English and its status in relation to Arabic depended on when a local or global perspective was taken. Conceptions of Arabic as a lingua franca for residents in the greater Abu Dhabi emirate explained the secondary status of English. From this vantage, English appeared as a default lingua franca with non-Arabic speakers. Its limited value in the rural Western Region also explained its lowered status in relation to Arabic. It should be pointed out that when describing Arabic as a faith-based language, no parallel reference to English was made. English ranked above Arabic in terms of economic power and international reach when acknowledging global perspectives and justifications for their interest in this language were evident from this stance. Also, rich face-to-face experiences using English with non-Arabic speaking populations in Abu Dhabi were prevalent, suggesting that its presence in Abu Dhabi was not problematised from this frame of reference.

The participants also used conceptions of Arabic's heterogeneity to explain how the English they heard in Abu Dhabi varied. Four varieties of Egyptian English, British English, American English and Indian English were mentioned but not emphasised. Credentials of English native-speakerhood were also not emphasised. Rather credentials of Arabic proficiency, but not necessarily native-speaker status, appeared. Linguistic profiling of teachers and other interactants as Arabic or non-Arabic users appeared. Media-accessed cultural content, while

mentioned by PS participants as sources of conceptions of English varieties, were not prevalent in the main study. English, like Arabic, was largely described as a resource for contending with a range of social experiences.

7.3. Linguistic Pluralism in Abu Dhabi

In addition to Arabic and English as main languages used in Abu Dhabi, four other languages appeared as part of Abu Dhabi's linguistic environment. FG participants introduced "Indian" and "Persian" as two languages used on the margins of social life (van den Hoven, 2014a). Subsequent investigation from the ten individual interviews added two other languages: Filipino and Korean (van den Hoven & Carroll, 2017). While all participants identified English and Arabic as the main choices, a minority of the participants expressed that these four languages also belonged to the "Abu Dhabi's rich linguistic context" (van den Hoven & Carroll, 2017, p. 39) but served limited communicative functions. Indeed, other languages are used among the multilingual residents of Abu Dhabi but no further languages were specified.

The sections that follow provide brief descriptions of "Indian," "Persian," Korean and Tagalog. I refer to these as peripheral languages and describe the participants' descriptions of these languages in order to outline some of the linguistic complexities of speech encounters in Abu Dhabi. The participants, who foregrounded English and Arabic in social importance, also discussed several other languages, conveying that they were a part of Abu Dhabi's linguistic backdrop. Hence, the inclusion of these four other languages in this study on English exposes the salient multilingual dimensions of languages experienced on daily basis, which renders a focus on two languages only as inadequate. The availability of these languages in the speech

environment then contributes to understandings of the place of English in Abu Dhabi as a multilingual speech community, which should contextualise conceptions surrounding its value as a medium of instruction in this context.

7.3.1.1. Conceptions of “Indian”

All participants reported they were proficient in Arabic and English but none knew how to speak “Indian.” Nevertheless, several participants reported male members within their speech community, namely fathers and brothers, who had linguistic resources in “Indian.” This language was warmly described by several participants for two reasons: 1) playing an important historical role in UAE society; and, 2) being a feature of daily communication for some family members. The extract below shows AM’s enthusiasm for the place of Indian in UAE society: “The MOST important in UAE! INDIAN!” (FG3, 101). Although King (2013) has recently drawn attention to the contributions of English teachers of Indian origin, there is little scholarship on communication patterns between members of Indian communities and Emiratis. Despite being on the periphery of the participants’ social worlds, this topic invited robust commentary. According to AM, the historical significance of Indian workers in the UAE helped make the “Indian” language a main language for her father’s generation, as shown below: “[O]ur fathers usually - uhm - because they have something to do with them – work - ah [...] building some - anything. That’s why they used to talk in Indian. They DID NOT LEARN how to talk! [...] But because of the USE of the – THIS language, they – they can memorise it well. (AM, FG3, 102-111)

AM recognised the value of “Indian” as a contact language in the UAE, which predates the arrival of English. Although this language is situated outside of her conversational activities, it is nevertheless accessible. Use of this language is valued for serving intercultural communication in workplace settings, primarily hosted by males. FG3 participants explained that their fathers’ abilities to speak at length in this language was not premised on formal learning. Rather purposeful interaction with “Indian” workers provided the necessary opportunities to gain proficiency. For AM, GA and EM, being able to speak at length means native-speakerhood, as shown in the following extract:

AM: They can say FULL sentence - paragraph for you

EM: They are fluent!

AM: in Indian

GA: A native Indian speaker.

AM: We can call them FLUENT in Indian! (*GA laughs*) even they did not study this language. (FG3, 112-114)

These extracts are interesting for conveying respect for their fathers’ proficiency in the “Indian” language and its historical importance as a local lingua franca. In addition, conceptions of language acquisition based on face-to-face interactions, which leads to fluency, are also evident. The participants, who emphasised that their fathers did not need formal study, make no reference to grammatical accuracy. Of special note, Charise (2007) suggests that “hybrid varieties of Urdu/Hindi and English” (p. 3) were developed among multi-ethnic construction workers. In this sense, “Indian” is conceptualised as a contact language (Weinreich, 1979), a language which belongs to Emirati experience, and a local lingua franca amongst working men. These

conceptions identify a social need for a common language. I suggest that English operates as contemporary manifestation of a common language, which is accessible to men and women through formal education and used among urban, multi-ethnic users.

Of some concern from the vantage of the participants' futures as teachers is that some participants showed limited awareness of multilingual India and the diverse languages used there. In the extract below, AM and GA conveyed that they were unable to offer further details regarding "Indian" languages:

MV: So Indian actually has - like in India, there have many languages, [AM: yeah.]
right? So which one is used here?

AM: The basic. [GA: I don't know.] I think the basic that -

MV: Is that Hindi, do you mean? 'Cause there's Punjabi -

AM: I don't know the names but yeah.

MV: You don't know.

GA: I don't know which kind of accent - but Indian!

AM: That's it – yeah (*All participants laugh*). (FG3, 115-121)

GA and AM found it acceptable to gloss all the Indian subcontinent languages into a homogenous national entity. Although the local English media has reported on Hindi and Urdu as two historically important trade languages as well as linguistic influences on the local dialect, alongside Farsi and Swahili (Razgova, 2014), in-depth coverage of this topic is rare. Accordingly, the participants' responses expose a lack of awareness of a range of official languages as well as a lack of English vocabulary for Hindi, Urdu and other South Indian

languages. It should be pointed out that, to some extent, gendered patterns of communication constrain social interaction between Emirati women and Indian or Pakistani expatriates, who are mostly male and often known as “bachelors” or “labourers.” Nevertheless, the prominence of Indian and Pakistani expatriates in the region deserve greater recognition because of their large numbers and increasing economic power in business and education sectors as well as concerns that both groups are subject to “incorrect stereotypes” (Kapiszewski, 2001, p. 145) and “continuing misconceptions” (King, 2013, p. 170). In general, greater recognition about ethnolinguistic diversity as it pertains to UAE history is vital for EMTs who are set to teach the future generation.

7.3.1.2. Conceptions of “Persian”

Like Indian, “Persian” was also identified as a language belonging to Emirati society. Participants in FG3 and FG4 identified Persian as a language used by Emiratis from Iranian descent. The extract below identifies this language as used as a home language for some Emiratis:

MV: Are there any other languages that you use here in the UAE?

SF: Ah - like for -ah - people who - ah (p) (? My - them - ah - am - *du-lich*)

HM: Ah - okay, where’s like Pre-sian - uhm - between each other they talk [FM: yeah]

Pre-sian [FM: Even if they are Emiratis]

MV: So they - they use - you mean, Persian from, like, where Iran is?

SF: Yeah.

MV: Okay, so where do people speak Persian?

HM: Like with each other they are from Iran.

SF: From the same family or from the same [HM: they talk] I think

HM: They talk to each other and [FM: it's some]

MV: So in the house - in the home?

SF: Yeah in the home. (FG4, 237-48)

This extract surprised me in revealing my lack of linguistic awareness of Iranian-Emirati cultural links. Despite years residing in Abu Dhabi, I was not aware that Arabic might not be the home or family language for some Emiratis. AM also identified that this language is used by some Emirati families, when she stated, “because some people are coming from Iran” (FG3, 42). AM did not provide labels, such as “Persian” or “Farsi,” for this language, and given that information about the Iranian heritage of some Emiratis is sparse, I suggest that such terminology is possibly not familiar to her.

The ethno-linguistic diversity of Emiratis merit some scrutiny in relation to the challenges of biliteracy. As suggested by Bristol-Rhys (2010), the prevailing image of a timeless and noble Bedouin past, as a constructed myth of Emirati heritage promoted by Abu Dhabi's Authority for Culture and Heritage, dominates and, in so doing, obscures Persian and other intercultural links before the discovery of oil. However, Persian-UAE links appear in the literature concerning migration patterns along shared coastal areas (Al-Fahim, 2006). Furthermore, naturalisation processes for Gulf-based people of Iranian descent implemented in Dubai by Sheikh Zayed occurred in the first decade of federation (Kapiszewski, 2001, p. 51) not only temper Bedouin representations but also expose potential issues related to a lack of mastery of Arabic. My own lack of awareness of the ethnic diversity of Emiratis as pertains to

neighboring countries, such as Iran and the surrounding areas, like Yemen, Saudi Arabi and Oman, suggests that blanket assumptions that English is a learned language and Arabic is a home language are limited in value. Other home language practices exist. Given the importance of home literacy practices for academic literacy in higher education, greater scholarly attention to the ethno-linguistic diversity of Emiratis can elucidate the nature of challenges when learning to read and write in Arabic or English.

7.3.1.3. Conceptions of Filipino

Filipinos constitute a prominent expatriate group employed in the service sectors of the Abu Dhabi economy, and, thus, “Filipino” and other languages spoken in the Philippines – are largely – but not exclusively - limited to speech members of this sector. The service sector includes domestic workers in the home and those employed in hotels, restaurants, malls and airlines. However, as noted by one participant, EQ, Filipino was used in her home between her Filipina mother and Filipina maid. EQ reported that Filipino was not used for daily communication among her family members because of a necessary social distance, sanctioned by her Emirati father, who wished to ensure his children prioritised Arabic. EQ’s account suggests that while Filipino was not actively practiced in her home domains, she knew other Filipino-Emiratis families where Filipino was the home language. Nevertheless, from EQ’s account, Filipino is an identifiable, peripheral language. Although this language is mainly recognised as used by Filipino residents in the UAE, EQ provides some evidence of its use in Emirati homes where intercultural marriages between an Emirati father and Filipina have occurred. More importantly, her account draws attention to the influence of intercultural marriages on linguistic diversity in the UAE. This finding suggests that intercultural marriages are an under-examined

facet of Emirati society affecting language acquisition processes in the Gulf, and is a topic deserving more research.

It should also pointed out that in the interview, I first used the label, “Tagalog.” From that point on, EQ used the word Tagalog instead of Filipino. In the extract below, EQ described Tagalog as a language which she has heard her mother use alongside English and Arabic in the home, rendering Tagalog a familiar language for her but not a language she uses for daily communication: “I can understand some common Tagalog words but I cannot speak fluently” (II3, 440-441). EQ also mentioned that her mother and father had used English in the home until her mother acquired sufficient Arabic. EQ’s account also raises the issue of the prominence of English-using Filipina housemaids and nannies, yet it was surprising that other participants did not raise the influence of Filipinas on English use among young Emirati children in the home domain. The issue of Anglophone home environments has been raised as a matter of increasing concern for some Emirati families (Troudi & Jendli, 2011). The findings related to Filipino also apply to Persian and serve to underscore the importance of learning more about the quality and quantity of English and other language use in the home. Such research is pertinent for understanding issues underpinning Arabic literacy and should be undertaken before causal claims are made about the impact of EMI on Arabic literacy.

7.3.1.4. Conceptions of Korean

Using Korean vocabulary in casual conversations among some college friends is a recent trend enjoyed by a few of the participants. Although it cannot be claimed that Emirati college students speak Korean, three different participants reported borrowing Korean vocabulary and

hybridised Korean-English words, also known as Konglish, when conversing with peers at the college. In the extract below. FH explained that Arabic, English and Korean were part of her linguistic repertoire:

FH: I speak Arabic and English. A little bit Korean (*MV inhales*) ‘cause I love ‘drama’ and like this.

MV: Really? And so, how do you experience – ah - Korean?

FH: Korean, I watch a lot of ‘drama’, and I’m, you know, a ‘fan’ for some - ah – clubs or like this, some actors, and I want to speak in Eng - (*FH laughs*) in Korean with my friends during – ah - While we are in college, we’re talkin’ in Korean. (II, 15-19)

Although FH claims to know a “a lot” (FH, II8, 21) of Korean words, her knowledge of Korean was limited to slang, hybridised, Korean-English words and informal expressions. As a former resident of Korea, I identified that she used expressions that are prevalent in the Korean media but rarely featured in Korean language courses. Some expressions she used included: *ba-bo-ya* (slang for ‘hey, that’s stupid!’ as well as *sa-rang-he-yo* (‘I love you’) and *bo-go-ship-o-yo* (‘I want to see you’). However, when I quizzed her about the word for “teacher” or “student”, FH drew blanks. FH and two other participants reported initially encountering Korean words and expressions from satellite television which broadcasts Korean dramas featured on Arirang TV, a Korean television channel which broadcasts in English and features Korean movies with English subtitles for international audiences. Several participants also reported practicing popularised expressions in a Korean club at the college with teachers who know Korean.

MM reported learning Korean expressions primarily to keep abreast of trends flagged by her peers. She credited the appeal of watching Korean films for its cultural content more so than the chance to learn Korean vocabulary. In the extract below, MM explained that the portrayals of relationships between children and parents as well as romantic partners in Korean films appealed to her cultural sensibilities:

if they love each other, or something, they will not go (*whispers*) [? island] or something. They will be just, 'I love you' and it's the SAME in Arabic [? world]. Eh - the - yeah, they will not, like, ah - do something BIG (*MM laughs nervously*) [...] like, the girl will be shy and – and they will be confused and it's the SAME way in – in the Arabic, you know? [...] It's the same way! It's the same how they love each other. And how they RESPECT their parents is the same way in – in HERE. And (p) how they like - there is some common things. So that's why we feel the same, you know. Like if we see Hollywood, it's like totally different, you know? (II10, 676-693)

These accounts of learning Korean point to agency in navigating cultural content and accommodating foreign vocabulary into college-based communication.

FH signaled her engagement with Korean youth culture by using expressions acquired from Korean dramas and K-Pop in banter with friends at the college. AY also reported using Korean in this way. From my participant observations, I also overheard some Korean for greetings, friendly insults and side-comments. At times, Korean was mixed alongside English when the participants engaged with me. At other times, I heard Korean words in casual conversations conducted in local Arabic. MM, who has learned Korean vocabulary from

television, expressed that the content was more engaging than Hollywood films for reflecting a parallel worldview. She highlighted that the representations of various kinds of loving interpersonal relationships have shown her that Korean culture is not foreign in terms of gendered relations.

Of special note, MM's account also provides insight into how English mediated access to Korean via English subtitles. For MM, knowing English provided a bridge to Korean content. Using English in this way did not necessarily mean she accepted Western representations as normative or appropriate, particularly those Hollywood films, which she described as "totally different." Such conceptions of Korean point to motivation to learn other languages and they also underscore how English features as an enabling access to other languages. This finding also shows that young Emiratis, like young Japanese, show commitment to learning languages which are borne of local and contextualised experiences (Ryan, 2009).

Despite recent arrivals of Koreans in large numbers due to economic partnerships and educational exchanges pertaining to the nuclear energy and medical tourism sectors (Croucher, 2014; Crowcroft, 2012), the participants' interest in Korean is not primarily motivated by a desire to engage Koreans in authentic conversation. However, continued trade pacts between the UAE and Korea suggest that the presence of Koreans in the UAE is set to increase (Malek, 2014, 2016). With this development, interest in learning this language in HE may become more prominent. Such a development would then further highlight the UAE's English-medium HEIs as multilingual zones.

Summary of the findings on linguistic awareness in Abu Dhabi

As argued in chapter two, UAE-based scholarship on the use of English for learning and learning in English has highlighted student attitudes to English. Theoretical arguments casting English as a threat to Arabic and Islam prevail (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011; Belhiah & Elhami, 2015; Charise, 2007; Karmani, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c) yet findings from several studies point to positive student attitudes where English is positioned as a resource (Belhiah & Elhami, 2015; Findlow, 2006; Karmani, 2010; Randall & Samimi, 2010). The participants in my study foregrounded English and Arabic as languages belonging to their daily experiences. They conveyed that English and Arabic were main languages which belonged to the Abu Dhabi speech environment. In other words, both languages are conceptualised as vital resources. They also recognised the vitality of other languages in ways that extend Findlow's Findlow (2006) claims of linguistic dualism. These findings shared in this chapter offer a fresh look at the place of English in Abu Dhabi which take into account conceptions of several languages arising from concrete experiences of ethnolinguistic diversity. The participants described six languages in total. In addition to English and Arabic, they presented "Indian," "Persian", Filipino and Korean as additional languages relevant for daily communication.

The findings also highlighted a range of past and present influences which mediate conceptions of English and other languages. Their conceptions show understandings of languages as resources for the local context. The participants identified important social influences via historical patterns of migration, intercultural marriages, interactions with teachers and expatriate workers in various sectors, and access to the media. As such, this study highlights the complexities of language use in Abu Dhabi and a range of social influences located in the

local speech environment. The prevalence of other languages and the recognition of as a multilingual social space points to reason why English could be viewed as a default lingua franca. The participants conveyed that Abu Dhabi is a multilingual city where Arabic is the main lingua franca but several other languages are useful resources for particular social functions. As illustrated in chapter six, English and Arabic are recognised for serving numerous discrete social purposes and, as such, the participants consider the linguistic profile of the interactants they meet carefully so that communication is enabled.

These findings contribute to the literature by underscoring Troudi and Jendli's (2011) criticism of "established discourses that have been reinforcing English as a language of science and academia while relegating Arabic to a language of heritage and religion" (p.23) by challenging their claims of "the constant onslaught of English and its disastrous effects on Arabic as a language and a cultural symbol" (pp. 41-42). More significantly, the findings shared in this study point out relationships of English and Arabic to each other and among a diverse range of dynamic, linguistic experiences possible in Abu Dhabi. As suggested by Ryan (2009) research of particular microcosms are important for exposing "a clear gap between the rhetoric and the reality, which serves to send mixed signals to learners of English." (p. 6)

The participants' accounts also exemplify the multilingual terrain which they struggled to describe. In the Abu Dhabi context, the participants readily described Arabic as the language of wider communication throughout their Muslim and Arab communities and conveyed that its use outside these communities was not common. Instead they identified English as a default lingua franca among a wide cross-section of non-Arabic speaking expatriate residents. From this vantage, English and Arabic are both socially valued but Arabic ranks first in social importance

in Abu Dhabi and English as second. The participants nominated other languages for fulfilling other roles, even though at times, they lack rich language to describe these languages. According to Charise (2007), the region hosts Urdu, Pasto, Farsi, other varieties of Arabic as well as other varieties of English, suggesting at once the benefits that further sociolinguistic research into linguistic diversity in the Arabian Gulf can bring.

Gaps due to a lack of fieldwork on the characteristics of linguistic diversity present in the UAE prevent understanding of the particular ways that Emiratis navigate this linguistic terrain. The female Emirati pre-service teachers in my study were at a particular teacher training college during a specific period of educational reform. As such, these findings offer some initial insights into this dimension of sociolinguistic research in the Arabian Gulf. In conclusion, the findings shared here locate English as one of several languages perceived as a core part of daily life for the participants located in Abu Dhabi. The findings exemplify student perceptions of the complexities of language use in Abu Dhabi and, accordingly, the rich linguistic experiences which UAE students recognise as a part of daily life. The findings shared in this chapter help set a priority for sociolinguistic researchers, English language educators, and English-medium teachers in the region to learn more about the dynamism of linguistic repertoires and student perspectives of different ways of using English as a communicative resource developed in the face of ethno-linguistic diversity within Abu Dhabi's borders.

CHAPTER EIGHT

8. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter offers conclusions to the study. It begins with an overview of the study, the research questions, and answers to the research questions. It then highlights how the findings contribute to conceptual understandings of the phenomena under study. After that, it discusses implications of the study in terms of theoretical, methodological and pedagogical insights. My focus is on how the findings can guide concerned stakeholders about ways of thinking about 1) English and social experiences using English as a medium of instruction (EMI), 2) research concerning Emirati students in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), 3) Abu Dhabi's linguistic environment, 4) linguistic practices using English in an Arabic-speaking context; 5) tissues related to teaching in an English-medium higher education institutions (HEIs) with similar population dynamics; and, 6) teaching and learning interactions at the teacher training college (TTC) in the Arabian Gulf. Finally, I address limitations of the study and offer suggestions for future research.

8.1. Overview of the study

This ethnographic investigation documented the complex and diverse ways that 16 Emirati pre-service teachers conceptualised English during a dynamic phase of educational reform in the UAE. To locate the relevance of the study, I described the changing place of English in Abu Dhabi's brief educational history to explain emirate-level changes driven by the Abu Dhabi emirate authority and a resultant shift away from teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to using EMI. I also pointed out that with the inception of higher education (HE)

in the UAE in the late 1970s, EMI has been a constant feature. However, the adoption of EMI for elementary school in 2010 marked a distinct shift towards biliteracy in English and Arabic for young Emirati children (Badri & Al Khaili, 2014; Gallagher, 2011). This new vision ushered in fresh opportunities for Emirati women to become English-medium teachers (EMTs) to take important new roles in society via learning how to teach English, mathematics and science in English to Emirati children. It also led to positions for expatriate teachers, like myself, to teach using EMI.

The particularities of this English-medium HEI in Abu Dhabi gave rise to questions about what English means for the Arabic speakers I taught and how I should best teach such students in an English-medium educational setting. While there are many interdisciplinary approaches to researching EMI, I situated the study within the bodies of literature concerned with English language teaching (ELT) because of its conceptual insights into English language variation and social processes of language change. My research questions emerged from tensions stemming from my professional experiences teaching at a college for teacher training in Abu Dhabi and claims made in the literature that English was an issue for this context and discussed as a threat to Arabic and Islam (Charise, 2007; Karmani, 2005a, 2005b). Accordingly, my research questions explored the names, labels and meanings that Emirati pre-service teachers used for English (research question 1) as well as their perspectives of the kinds of social influences that mediated their conceptions of English at this time in their lives (research question 2).

The study featured data from three phases of data collection across a period of a year. It drew upon four focus groups interviews, 66 field notes taken during a period of two academic semesters of participant observations, and 10 individual interviews. My use of these

ethnographic methods developed from careful reading of classic texts (Hammersley, 1992, 1998; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995; Morgan, 1997; Spradley, 1979, 1980), contemporary research guidelines, which acknowledge personal disposition and disciplinary interests (Barbour, 2008; Holliday, 2009). I also drew upon discussions of focus group methods adapted for the Arabian Gulf (Thomas, 2008; Winslow et al., 2002). My understanding of procedures for data analysis derived from various readings about thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Like Barbour's (2008) metaphor of learning to research as jumping in the deep end, I learned how to manage the research process at each stage amidst considerable work pressures.

8.1.1. Research questions and answers

In this section, I review the research questions and then summarise how I answered them and what the answers were. The two research questions were:

- 1) What are Emirati pre-service teachers' conceptions of English in light of its use as a medium of instruction?
- 2) What are the social influences mediating conceptions of English?

To answer the research questions and make sense of the literature read and the data collected, I referred to Edward's (1995) postulates on research into language use in multilingual contexts. Accordingly, I framed my findings pertaining to conceptions of English in terms of a) descriptions of individual linguistic practices, and b) perceptions of the place of English in reference to the larger group dynamics of Abu Dhabi as a speech community. In chapters six and seven, I highlighted findings which answered the two research questions in an integrated way. In

chapter six, I presented findings on how the participants conceptualised English in light of its daily use. This necessarily revealed the social group dynamics involved as they recounted the situations where they used English and the kinds of people they used English with, including students and teachers at the college. In this way, I accessed labels they shared with me for their linguistic practices as well as the kinds of social influences involved in each pattern of conversation activity reported. In this thesis, I highlighted the participants' references to using English for various teaching and learning interactions as a way of illustrating their agency in deciding how to use the languages they know. In chapter seven, I presented findings based on the participants' descriptions of the languages they experienced in Abu Dhabi. This chapter shifts in focus to the participants' perspectives as English-using members of an Abu Dhabi speech community as they take into account their social participation in a wider collective. The findings in chapter seven highlight their perspectives of Abu Dhabi as a multilingual environment and a complex social space to navigate in ways that position English and Arabic as well as the languages they know as resources.

The next section summarises my answers to each question by drawing on the two findings chapters.

8.1.1.1. Answers to Research question 1: What are Emirati pre-service teachers' conceptions of English in light of its use as a medium of instruction?

Based on the participants' accounts, English is conceptualised as a variable and dynamic social practice, which is useful in the wider Arabic-speaking environment for several purposes.

While ways of using English and Arabic at the college can be distinguished from its broader social use in Abu Dhabi, this broader speech community also enables interpreting shifts of meaning provoked by the use of EMI in educational domains. Specifically, the English-medium context gives rise to an array of conversational activities. I offered “language mode” (Grosjean, 2001, p. 3) as a way to make sense of the variable, social practices the participants described. The findings showed that there were four English language modes, which were nested within the participants’ dynamic linguistic repertoires featuring various modes of Arabic. Based on the words used in the participants’ accounts, I classified them as: 1) Simple English, 2) Learner English, 3) Academic English and, 4) Simplified English. The latter three modes pertained exclusively to teacher-student interactions that were shaped in large part by their usage in classroom settings.

From the vantage of how English fits into the Abu Dhabi speech community, other findings appeared pertaining to the social value of English. The participants described English as a language which belonged to the speech environment. While English had a place in Abu Dhabi, the ranking of English was defined by Arabic. Both languages, English and Arabic, were described as resources for managing intranational and international communication. In other words, the findings show that both languages were arranged hierarchically in terms of social value. In reference to the relative value of English and Arabic as *lingua francas*, the participants ranked English second in importance to Arabic. However, English and Arabic were both necessary for daily interaction. Accordingly, English, like Arabic, is a predominant language in Abu Dhabi. The findings reported on various metaphors marking the utility of each language as a resource. Furthermore, while English and Arabic come to the forefront of language awareness,

other languages were also recognised as part of Abu Dhabi's rich linguistic environment. In sum, English was conceptualised as an important language for them defined by heterogeneous social experiences. The participants described English as having an important place in individual linguistic repertoires, and within a multilingual speech community in Abu Dhabi.

8.1.1.2. Answers to Research question 2: What are the social influences mediating conceptions of English?

The participants' conceptions of English as a heterogeneous entity relied on explanations of face-to-face interactions. The findings in chapter six show that the participants interpreted the linguistic profiles of their fellow interactants and made estimations of how they should adjust their speech to ensure intelligibility. The findings clarified that the participants readily identified the kinds of people they use English with as well as those they should not use English with. Fellow English users included foreign or expatriate residents in the UAE. When describing English users in Abu Dhabi, there appeared four types: Indian, Egyptian, British and American. However, designations at the college generated two labels. These labels were applied to the TTC teachers and suggest sensitivity to their teachers' linguistic profiles, namely the viability of using Arabic with them. The labels given were: 1) bilingual, Arab, or Arabic; and 2) non-Arabic, English, or foreign. Emiratis also appeared as salient social influences for particular manifestations of Arabic hybridised with English and, to a limited extent, other languages they knew. Rich social experiences of Arabic language variation also constituted a social influence mediating conceptions of how English was similar to Arabic in this regard. Infrequent experiences with English novels borrowed from the library as well as downloadable Korean, Western, and Bollywood movies also appeared as indirect social influences fostering cultural

awareness of English-speaking societies and others. These resources offered minor experiences with written English text via subtitling. In addition, social experiences with other languages featured in the speech environment also helped the participants describe the place of English in their social worlds.

8.1.2. Contributions to conceptual understandings of English

This section highlights findings which contribute to knowledge about conceptions of English, and perspectives of linguistic practices in English. On the basis of the accounts of Emirati pre-service teachers during an era of educational transformation, this section discusses contributions in reference to broader themes established in the Arabian Gulf literature. The purpose of this section is to challenge, affirm or enrich claims related to English and English use. This section also offers insights to complement research endeavours in English language use in multilingual academic contexts, which I expand upon below.

8.1.2.1. Orientations to language as a resource are prevalent.

By asking Emirati pre-service teachers to describe how, where, when, why and with whom they used English and Arabic in daily life before targeting how they used EMI at TTC, student-generated labels emerged, which conveyed how they regarded the purposes for using English, Arabic and other languages they knew. In reference to language in society, Ruiz (1988) offers three basic orientations to language: a problem, a resource, and a right. Among these orientations, conceptions of language as a resource for serving communication were dominant. English, Arabic and other languages mentioned were credited as having social value. To date, underlying conceptions of language have not been addressed in the UAE literature. Thus, this

study offers a new perspective of orientations to language. It begins with conceptions of “language” as a root node for “English”, and, in this way, reviews tacit understandings of language before investigating what English means in this context.

8.1.2.2. Languages can be ranked.

The findings showed that the participants recognised diverse languages in their social world and ranked them hierarchically in terms of social value. To this end, English and Arabic were conceptualised as main languages of daily importance with Arabic holding the number one status over English. In addition, there were other notable languages hosted within the broader speech community. These languages were significant for historical reasons and current social dynamics, but they were ranked as of lesser importance than English and Arabic. In short, these languages featured in the background of daily life while English and Arabic came to the front. Language hierarchies are recognised in the broader literature as a way language communities contend with multilingualism (Edwards, 2002). The findings show that Arabic was more valuable overall than English but in ways that suggested it was better to have access to two languages than only one. The findings underscore that conceptions of additive bilingualism rather than subtractive bilingualism for the UAE context (Gallagher, 2011; van den Hoven, 2014b; van den Hoven & Carroll, 2017) better explains how the participants valued the languages they knew.

8.1.2.3. Conceptions of English as useful tool were prevalent.

The findings shared a number of striking metaphors and labels for English that the participants used. The metaphors differed in tone and quality from those offered in the UAE

literature base. The participants offered a “key” and a “rope,” for instance, to reflect the usefulness and necessity of English in their daily lives. Specifically, the key connotes helping oneself whereas the rope is for helping others. In contrast, the UAE literature features metaphors of English as “a double-edged sword” (Hopkins, 2014, p. 1) and other expressions of English as a threat to UAE culture, Arabic and Islam (Al-Issa & Dahan, 2011; Belhiah & Elhami, 2015; Charise, 2007; Karmani, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c; Troudi & Jendli, 2011). In other words, the participants offered different metaphors premised on orientations of English as a social and societal resource.

Although the participants did not conceptualise English as a problem, they did problematise experiences associated with EMI. As found in King’s (2014) study on expatriate teachers of Emirati students in English-medium HEIs in the UAE, high-stake tests were the problem. In addition, bilingual teachers at the TTC who overly relied on Arabic were a source of stress for preventing English language development. The participants also used various functional labels to designate orientations to English in education (Sergeant, 2010), such as English as an second, foreign, and international language (i.e. ESL, EFL and EIL). However, these labels were used as rationales justifying a temporarily held stance in response to a concern at hand, such as difficulties in mastering English, or benefits to learning the language. However, it was not uncommon for participants to use one or more labels to signal shifts in ways of thinking about English. Similar functional labels for English appear in the UAE literature (Badri & Al Khaili, 2014; Dahan, 2007; Karmani, 2005c; Martin, 2003; Syed, 2003), albeit in a greater number and variety. It should be pointed out that labels used in the literature show prevailing interests in the language as an ideological construct. As Sergeant (2010) cautions, such naming

practices for English show predetermined assumptions rather than the results of empirical research. Hence, an important contribution of my study is a focus on the labels and orientations emerging from empirical study of the participants' accounts.

8.1.2.4. English is a part of the Abu Dhabi speech community.

The findings shared in the study also show English is a feature of Abu Dhabi as a social space. Understandings premised on English serving as a default lingua franca pointed to the inadequacy of conceptualising English as a property of a people. The relevance of English for Abu Dhabi's linguistic ecology, as it came into focus, challenged my own orientations to English. An early interest lay in delineating ESL and EFL orientations. I first explored which variety of English Emirati pre-service teachers esteemed as best for education, and if they acknowledged an Emirati variety of English. Accordingly, I had asked direct questions about varieties of English in the preliminary study (PS), which generated four broadly construed varieties of English: Egyptian English, Indian English, British English and American English (van den Hoven, 2014b). Reference to these varietal distinctions reappeared in the main study but lacked prominence in the participants' explanations. This insight prompted a closer look at the TTC as a microcosm nested in a wider linguistic ecology. As such, a contribution of this study is its attention to perspectives of sub-national linguistic dynamics and descriptions of the local purposes for English, as reported by educated users of English. The findings offer new insights into perspectives of Abu Dhabi as a linguistic ecology. In this way, it shares conceptions of English borne of local and contextualised social group dynamics (Edwards, 2002), capable of enriching understandings of perspectives of language behaviours in Abu Dhabi as a multilingual context.

8.1.2.5. *Social experiences using English are heterogeneous.*

While the participants recognised English as a language they used as a coherent entity used by many around the world, it was inadequate to describe experiences using English in homogeneous terms. In other words, the participants emphasised that they used English with different people in different contexts for different reasons, and, furthermore, in different ways. The findings show the use of English in various public domains was for needs and wants in hospitals and shops, as well as for gaining subject knowledge in HEIs. A strength of this study is exemplifying distinct patterns of using English with attention to salient formal and contextual features.

Apart from my own publications (van den Hoven, 2014a), patterns of English linguistic variation within the UAE's microcosm has not been widely addressed. There are, however, efforts to describe emerging varieties of English in the Emirates (Boyle, 2011) and the Gulf (Fussell, 2011) with a view that English serves an “underlying pragmatic imperative” (Randall & Samimi, 2010, p. 49). Such research into systematic linguistic patterns of the use of English as a lingua franca is important for the field in contending “with the rare mix of bilingual and multilingual people” (Boyle, 2011, p. 148). However, this body of work shows tendencies to gloss a wide range of communicative encounters across the Gulf into a uniform variety with a “decidedly local flavour” (Fussell, 2011, p. 26). Rather than characterising the English used into a homogeneous experience, this study offers insightful descriptions of how English use varies within a particular microcosm. Accordingly, the findings in this study aligns with other research conducted in multilingual settings, such as South Africa and Singapore, concerning heterogeneous patterns of English (Pakir, 1991, 2004; Van der Walt, 2013; Van Rooy, 2010).

8.1.2.6. Conceptions of English are influenced by experiences of Arabic language variation.

To exemplify that linguistic behaviours of modifying language were not unique to English, the participants described in detail their experiences with Arabic language variation. Their experiences of English language variation were explained by their understandings of Arabic language variation. The participants qualified that even though Arabic was a lingua franca for the greater Muslim world, there were many varieties of Arabic with distinct phonological and lexical patterns. Furthermore, their understandings of Arabic language variation was not adequately explained by the concept of national varieties. Although exposure to television broadcasts featuring various accents from the region helped them in differentiating variety of Arabic by country, they suggested that tribal differences were vital for understanding linguistic differences among the varieties of Arabic they encountered. Accordingly, the participants conveyed that English language variation was a familiar phenomenon for them, and they did not necessarily rely on national constructs to their conceptions of English language variation.

8.1.2.7. Ways of using English reflects a linguistic choice.

The findings show that the participants made choices about how, when and with whom to use English and other languages. Accordingly, they recognised their agency in decision-making. The participants referred to conceptions of appropriate ways of using Arabic, which led to choices about how to vary English and other languages they knew. Their accounts of linguistic

choices when among certain people afforded fresh insights into a range of patterned conversational activity in English. The findings show that participants considered their interactants, purposes for communicating, and domain of conversational activity in their decision-making processes. Accordingly, this study enriches contributions to knowledge pertaining to Edward's (2002) assessment of language research on social group dynamics and code choice by offering new insights into decisions made by educated Emiratis in an Arabian Gulf context. In addition, this study affirms Findlow's (2006) claims about student agency in thinking about code choice. It also extends her claims by providing rich details about the choice to use English or Arabic or when it is suitable to blend the two languages.

8.1.2.8. Patterns of conversational activity address pragmatic choices and creative impulses.

The findings show that the participants' descriptions of how to use English was often a pragmatic choice, but within some accounts a spirit of playfulness emerged. For instance, creative impulses are noted when participants trialed blending words in English with Arabic morphemes and when inducting newcomers into this linguistic practice on the bus. Also, a spirit of playfulness is noted when participants used Korean in jest with each other in moments before and after class. The quality of such linguistic innovations merits further documentation. Nevertheless, a contribution of this study is in noting a linguistic phenomenon which cannot be readily explained as linguistic incompetence, or a lack of proficiency. The findings suggest the participants recognised that their linguistic skills were involved when modifying the languages they knew, and, for that matter, when deciding how to use English.

8.1.2.9. The use of EMI involves more than one way of using English

Concerning the participants' descriptions of using English as a medium for learning at the TTC, the findings show three patterns of communicating in English. Each pattern reflects different kinds of interactions and points of focus. Based on the participants' words and descriptions, labels for three modes are offered: 1) Learner English, 2) Academic English, and 3) Simplified English. As such, this study serves to clarify that while EMI is acknowledged to mean different things to different people (Dearden, 2014), it also highlights that within an English-medium environment, there is more than one way students will use English. The participants, who accounted for variation in the ways they used English in their daily lives, also offered parameters to understand English language variation at this HEI. Firstly, they acknowledged their own development in proficiency a phase as learners of English in General English classes. Secondly, they accessed different kinds of technical vocabulary in each of their subject knowledge courses as learners of content knowledge. Thirdly, they acknowledged fluctuations in student abilities when considering the needs or expectations, as seen when they took on temporary roles as student teachers of language and content and interacted with Emirati children in primary schools. These three modes concern teaching and learning interactions in English based on the mission of the English-medium institution.

A fourth mode, Simple English, was not associated with EMI. Its use in other zones of the campus shows that it serves a range of non-academic purposes as a common language for a range of English users. Thus, the findings about ways of using English offer vital insights into the size and shape of EMI in this Abu Dhabi HEI. In so doing, it contributes to knowledge about “where EMI is being implemented, how it is being implemented, and what are the effects and

outcomes of this implementation” (Dearden, 2014, p. 4) in respect to English language practices at the TTC. This study then provides new understandings about the diverse ways students reported using English in an English-medium educational institution.

8.1.2.10. The use of EMI affects patterns of communication in the home but English use is limited to discrete functions.

A further finding addresses the impact of EMI on Arabic language use in the home but in ways that challenges established claims in the regional literature base. While the findings confirmed that English was used in their home, the participants suggested that they limited this practice to discrete functions. These included consolidating learning, reporting on learning tasks, and the introduction and reinforcement of select lexical items to family members. The latter pattern showed that the participants recognised their agency in hybridising Local Arabic with English word borrowing. Such linguistic practices should be understood as a manifestation of a bilingual’s capacity for code-switching or translanguaging regarded as normative in multilingual contexts (Van der Walt, 2013). It suggests an orientation to English language learning which falls under additive bilingualism (May, 2011) where “the languages in the multilingual’s repertoire complement one another to produce the type of composite language competence that suits their needs” (Kachru, 1994, p. 797). This finding underscores the salience of the participants’ experiences of linguistic diversity outside the home and their awareness of appropriate functions for using some English in the home.

In summary, this section offers contributions to knowledge of conceptions of English in three broad ways. It points out the participants’ underlying orientations to languages as

resources, which are rankable in social value. As for conceptions of English, the participants conveyed that their experiences with Arabic language variation was useful for explaining what English is. In addition, the participants reported varying the form and register of English according to their perceptions of their interactants' linguistic profile and other contextual factors related to the communicative purpose at hand. In addition, they cited that their purposes for communication were not limited to pragmatic ones. The participants also reported three patterned ways of using English in their English-medium classrooms. A fourth pattern was used in domains outside of the classroom. As such, the study concludes that student perspectives of English in this English-medium setting in the Gulf show that there are several appropriate forms of English which are linked to distinct purposes.

8.2. Implications

This section now turns to the implications. I address theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical implications of the study for different stakeholders. My stance aligns with Van der Walt (2013) for seeing that knowledge about how a community uses language is a resource for teaching, learning, and researching. She points out that knowledge gains come from “[a]cknowledging the full repertoire or constellation of languages that are available in HE” (p. 18). Accordingly, I regard the findings and certain aspects of the conduct of the study as resources for researchers, educators and other stakeholders. The implications address: 1) theoretical and conceptual insights for modeling English use in educational domains as a set of conversational activities; 2) methodological recommendations for research involving female participants in an Arabian Gulf educational setting; and 3) practical suggestions for enhancing

teaching and learning at the TTC, which as an English-medium HEI can serve illustrative purposes for other HEIs sharing similar population dynamics.

8.2.1. Conceptual and theoretical implications

I begin by discussing how the thinking tools featured in chapter four can stimulate theoretical insights about the use of EMI for diverse multilingual academic communities (Dearden, 2014; Van Leeuwen, 2004). While my study aimed to offer insightful descriptions (Hammersley, 1992, 1998) of the social and linguistic realities of 16 Emirati pre-service teacher who use English on a daily basis, I hope my interpretations of relationships of the theoretical classical framework of the social construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1971) to new models of English language variation can be useful for others. In addition, I offer a revised definition of EMI moving the focus off of the language that a teacher uses to teach (Dearden, 2014) towards the social space. My aim is to reorient definitions of EMI to shared, negotiated and dynamic linguistic practices in English-medium academic environments. To this end, I propose several models of conversational activity that recognize dynamic linguistic repertoires. It is my hope that a discussion of ways to model the use of EMI shared in this section will offer productive insights for scholars in this and other contexts.

8.2.1.1. *Patterns of conversational activity can be modelled.*

Two tenants of social constructionism are that everyday conversations mediate conceptions of phenomena in the world and that participation in daily conversational activity mediates understandings of a shared reality among members of a speech community. In my study, English is such a shared phenomenon of social reality. English is also a means through

which everyday conversations happen at the TTC. It is also a subject of study. In other words, English operates as a common language in a shared speech community at the college and it is a subjective experience and shared phenomenon. My study targeted the participants' perspectives about what English is, how they got these ideas and, also, their accounts of what they do with English on a daily basis. As such, it offers student perspectives of English and English use at a HEI in Abu Dhabi. I premised the study on my awareness that there are also other domains where the participants used English on a daily basis. To this end, one of the study's main contributions is a description of the ways in which the participants identified their linguistic practices in respect to a broader repertoire of conversational activity.

An important step in my thinking process was classifying conversational activity into types. This section then considers contributions of this study in terms of the potential for modelling conversational activity in English and Arabic. I began by reviewing three models of conversational activity: 1) a linear model based on Berger & Luckmann's (1971) zones of conversational activity across a person's life span; 2) Pakir's (1991) model of expanding triangles of English expression to show representations of English-knowing bilinguals' depth and range of sub-varieties of English; and 3) expanding vortexes of Mahboob's (2014) model of language variation which highlights how English users change register according to domain of use. These models focus on dynamics in one language, but do not model interaction between two or more languages. Nevertheless, it was possible ways to adapt these models so that they represented conversational activity in terms of: 1) how participants use two or more languages in an English-medium educational context; 2) how they vary these languages; and 3) show the relationships among how they use each language in relations to the other(s). I recognised the

value of refashioning these models so that they attended to interaction of two or more languages since doing so would readily showcase my findings of linguistic repertoires and linguistic pluralism in a visual format.

*8.2.1.2. Models of language variation which show conversational activity
promotes understanding of student experiences of EMI.*

Representations of the use of EMI should take into account student perspectives. According to the participants in my study, there were four patterns of conversational activity: Learner English, Academic English, Simplified English and Simple English. These patterns should not be generalized across the region but they do invite comparisons, which can be assisted through modelling language use. For instance, three of the four patterns of conversational activity are likely to be similar to practices reported by students in other HEIs in the Arabic-speaking region, but I recognize that Simplified English with its focus on communicating with children learning to use English is uniquely bound to the TTC's mission and would only be relevant to a limited number of HEIs with a focus on Teacher Education and English-medium instruction. That said, the pathway of honing Learner English for progression to Academic English is pertinent for HEIs in the Arabian Gulf and likely those further afield since students attend preparatory courses in English language centres in HEIs all over the world.

I argue for greater attention to the quantity and quality of student-student conversational activity in English inclusive of this phase of learning English in this region. Research of this kind could enable stakeholders' insights into how students perceive use available speaking opportunities in English and how they manage learning opportunities offered in other languages.

For instance, the participants in my study did not describe student-to-student interaction in English but spoke highly of interactions with teacher even though student-teacher interactions did not seem robust outside of the classroom. The participants recognized unique patterns of conversational activity in Arabic, shedding light on how students manage conditions of Arabic diglossia on student experience of learning (Gallagher, 2011). Their accounts not only highlighted ways that they used their mother tongue to facilitate learning experiences and make complex concepts comprehensible (Cook, 2005), it also showed that they managed experiences of “English diglossia”.

When representing students’ accounts of conversational activity in English and other languages that students know, considerations of the value of doing so are important to establish. Dearden (2014) notes that EMI pertains to English use in non-anglophone countries where students use other languages. She points out that the use of the home language, code-switching, teacher development needs are rarely considered in top-down EMI policies in many contexts. Research in non-anglophone universities can examine these dimensions of student experience of English and other language use in these contexts and illustrate the findings in a visual format to render them more accessible. Research of this kind is also useful for stakeholders in anglophone universities given patterns of student migration and an interest in attracting international students so learning more about how international students perceive language use is valuable for host institutions.

Models of conversational activity in English and other languages among international teachers and students provide illustrative examples of how language users in multilingual speech communities manage daily conversations. I argue that insights into international student

experience and the quality of teacher contributions could show how students engage linguistically with others in academic settings and the extent to which cognitive and linguistic support is available through peer networks in shared languages. It could also demonstrate the extent to which they contribute to fulfilling broader visions around internationalisation experiences (Altbach & Knight, 2007). From the vantage as an English-speaking international student in the United States and England, I empathise with fellow international students who seek greater interaction with host nationals. Models of student perspectives of the quality and quantity of interactions among fellow students, their teachers, and other academic or support staff can help show who mediates student learning experiences in HE.

8.2.1.3. Language mode is useful for describing patterned conversational activity across two or more languages.

In this study, Grosjean's (2001) analysis of language use among bilinguals enabled reframing the participants' accounts of ways of using language in terms of "language mode". Some participants described needing time to mentally shift between English and Arabic, which matched Grosjean's iterations of "mode." These participants alluded to a necessary cognitive engagement to manage switching between two languages. Other theorists use "mode" to highlight other salient features of bilingual experience. For instance, Mahboob (2014) refers to "modes of communication" (p. 4) but considers modes of communication as a variable within language variation. In my study, I give "mode" a central focus for delineating the entire conversational pattern. Nevertheless, like Mahboob, I find "mode" a useful construct for accommodating language choice and decisions about register. My treatment, however, highlights linguistic responses developed from decisions about languages and register. When amassed

together, the range of modes illustrate some of the complexities of social interaction with speakers of diverse linguistic profiles. Arguably, Mahboob is aware of these dynamics but in his model English users are glossed as “local” or “global”.

In the thesis, I use “language mode” to recognise development of linguistic proficiency and increasing expectations around sophistication of speech performances. This treatment is influenced by Pakir’s (1991) discussion of clines of linguistic performance and their “depth and range” (p. 167). By infusing language mode with these understandings, social processes and subjective choices about which language to use and how to use it came to the fore. Therefore, I found “language mode” was productive. It enabled classifying distinct patterns of conversational activity and conceptualising how Arabic and English modes could be integrated within dynamic linguistic repertoires.

8.2.1.4. Towards a research agenda inclusive of hybridised conversational practices in EMI settings

The process of coming to terms with the participants’ accounts of Arabic and English use entailed contending with fuzzy, grey areas in the data (Barbour, 2008). A list of language modes served in my process of interpreting the data and clarifying salient features of each pattern. It also enabled seeing conversational practices which bore linguistic influences from other languages. Among the 12 modes, TTC-Flavour English best illustrates the participants’ conceptions of how they can mesh two languages in a meaningful way. As mentioned, this mode relies on Arabic grammar to structure talk about academic concepts acquired in English. This and other linguistic practices deserve greater international recognition for exemplifying

translanguaging as meaning-focussed conversational practices (Mazak, 2017) that support academic learning in HE. Sensitivity to the viability of translanguaging practices in bilingual education and for multilingual schools is growing (Creese & Blackledge, 2010), yet gaps in knowledge of the current sociolinguistic realities within multilingual communities remain a caveat for language teacher education programmes and a significant obstacle for theory-building for ELT (Matsuda, 2012).

Momentum in translanguaging research suggests that a research agenda into the use of EMI in HE can draw on “new ways of perceiving and promoting the linguistic and intellectual development of bilingual students” (Ekberg, 2016). I argue that ways of using English in HE and their integration with national and other spoken languages remain a source of “terminological confusion” (Van Leeuwen, 2004, p. 1) not only in Europe but worldwide (Dearden, 2014). In this regard, a research agenda targeting students’ perspectives of translanguaging practices in multilingual HEIs can demystify the kinds of linguistic choices students have when learning a language for academic purposes. Comparative research of this nature can also stimulate a critical look at assumptions of subtractive bilingualism prevalent in debates on EMI in the Arabian Gulf.

Research into student experiences of Arabic-English bilingualism, Arabic diglossia and other hybridised practices of English and Arabic, while still in its infancy (Al-Khatib, 2003; Al-Khatib, 2006; Gallagher, 2011; Mustafa & Al - Khatib, 1994; Saiegh-Haddad & Spolsky, 2014) is highly relevant for an EMI research agenda. Empirical studies examining how students report using Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), code-switching and other translanguaging practices should feed into debates about EMI in the Gulf and expectations of societal bilingualism in the wider Arab world. However, as recognised by Carroll and van den Hoven (2017), there are

potential stigmas posed to bilingual educators who admit using hybridised conversational activity in the UAE's HEIs. Yet, research from this vantage could mediate some of the stigmatisation prompted by hybridisation across English and Arabic (Carroll & van den Hoven, 2017). It could also allow sensitive discussions of language practices, which are elsewhere regarded as expected manifestations of individual bilingualism (Edwards, 2002).

My own research agenda has moved towards recognition of distinct translanguaging practices in English and Arabic. Developing from a list of eight modes of English and Arabic from the focus group data set (van den Hoven, 2014a), the additional ten interviews pointed to four more modes bearing linguistic influences from Korean and other varieties of Arabic. The participants' accounts pointed to an underlying and integrated skill set. Rhetoric informed by stances of subtractive bilingualism, which casts English as an agent and threat to Arabic or Islam, must be interrogated for sending confusing messages to students about their own linguistic resources (Ryan, 2009). Assumptions that translanguaging practices can serve learning must also be interrogated for how they can block also learning (Dillon et al., 2015). However, I argue that orientations to additive bilingualism with an interest in "a flexible juxtaposition of different 'languages' for meaningful learning with others in instructional processes" (Ekberg, 2016) is the way forward.

This agenda can be maximised if research projects aim to describe attitudes to translanguaging and translanguaging behaviours. One important way to increase the theoretical value of this orientation is to approach empirical investigations from a multilingual mindset (Doiz et al., 2013a). Another way is to identify patterns of hybridised language use and represent the findings visually. This necessitates a means to represent conversational patterns as

considered responses to particular social group dynamics. This study described the participants' perspectives of several hybridised patterns. These included Local Arabic with English words, TTC-flavour English, Arabish, and Simplified English. These patterns also show engagement with teaching and learning processes illustrative of a range of social encounters in an English-medium HEI. Other linguistic responses, such as Local Arabic with Korean words, and Local Arabic with other varieties of Arabic, connect to of cultural knowledge outside the intended curriculum. Documentation of student perspectives of conversational activity in English-medium environments contribute to an expansive picture of the place(s) of English and its relationship to linguistic practices within a larger sociolinguistic landscape.

8.2.1.5. Towards a new definition of EMI

This research agenda warrants a move away from defining EMI in terms of the language a teacher uses to teach ("Medium of instruction," 2012). The focus on the teacher, while a constant in English-medium settings, overshadows how students choose to respond. I propose a definition that clarifies that the focus should be on all linguistic behaviours generated by a vision to use EMI in a bounded setting versus what the teacher alone does in response. My definition is:

- EMI is a social condition of an educational domain, which prioritises conversational activity of an academic nature in English among students, teachers and other members of the educational community.

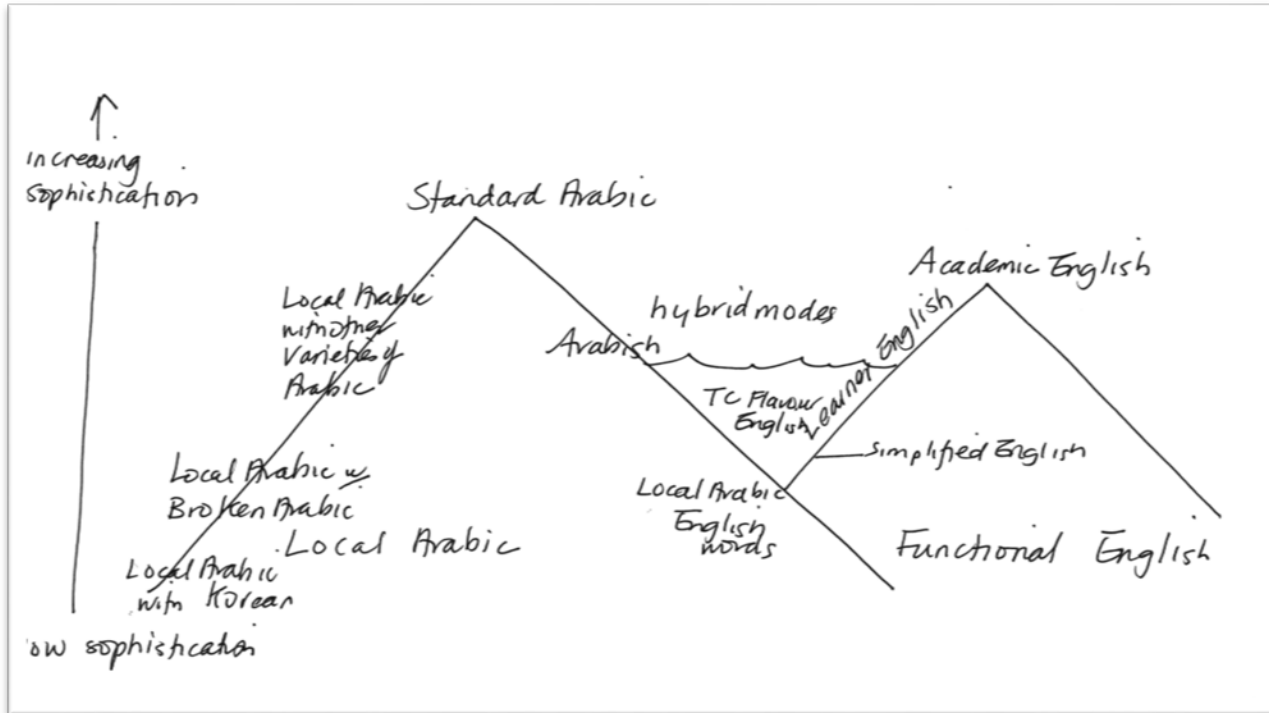
This definition orients to the educational domain as a linguistic ecology and recognises that languages other than English are prevalent. This definition of EMI can guide the development of a conceptual model of student perspectives of language use in EMI settings. In

addition, the focus on patterns of conversational activity can assist with a conceptual model of language awareness in multilingual societies, and a conceptual model representing changes to a common language across a timeline.

8.2.1.6. Towards a conceptual model of linguistic repertoires

The agenda, as posed, warrants the development of a conceptual model representing hybridised practices across two or more languages in educational domains where EMI has been mandated. A conceptual model I offer draws from Mahboob's (2014) model of expanding vortexes and Pakir's (1991, 2004) expanding triangles, as discussed in chapters four and eight. In particular, it relies on considerations of Mahboob's contextual variables and Pakir's attention to English users who switch from an elite mode of high prestige, such as Academic English, to a localised sub-variety. The purpose of such a model is to represent a range of modes within a person's linguistic repertoire. The participants in my study reported using English and Arabic yet identified that each language had its own academic sub-variety. This finding renders it necessary to recalibrate the one triangle frame into two triangles. It was also important to show Academic English and Standard Arabic as viewed as prestigious modes. This can be accomplished by locating them at the apex. Furthermore, the triangular arrangement is amenable to accommodating a number of Arabic modes. It is also easy to illustrate the primacy of Arabic by enlarging the size of the triangle in relation to the English one. Accordingly, the conceptual model, as described, can show the use of two languages as heterogeneous social experiences. It can also reflect expectations of a standard variety and others featuring hybrid modes, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Model of Linguistic Repertoires



This figure represents the linguistic repertoires of the 16 educated English users at the TTC. It illustrates how their reported practices of varying English and Arabic and shows relationships between the two languages. Like Pakir's model, I drew on observed and reported patterns of bilinguals. The development of my model grew from attending to the participants' rich accounts of daily practices in a particular microcosm in Abu Dhabi. My engagement in the setting as a teacher and a researcher supported attention to nuances of student experience of language variation. The model depicts a range of language modes, or patterns of conversational activity in a range of domains, including those developed in response to the use of EMI at the college. The model serves to represent student experience of Arabic and English, showing the ways of using language as an integrated skill set.

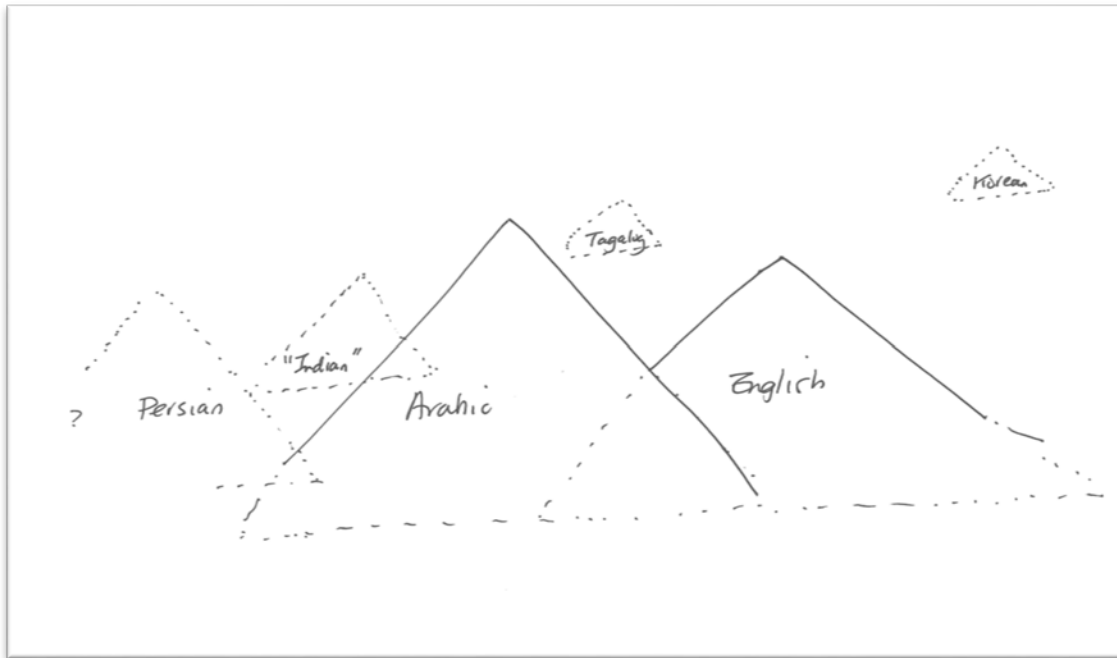
This way of visualising the data begets landscape and architecture metaphors. As suggested in Van Den Hoven and Litz (2016), educational metaphors can show rich understandings of social experiences and convey salient features of complex, dynamic phenomenon. They can also offer generalised feedback on perspectives of educational practices. Using a landscape metaphor, I located accounts of daily conversational practices as features of the wider base. In addition, student agency within hybrid modes can be identified as built constructions, which evoked playful metaphors of “jungle gym” or “treehouse.” Furthermore, locating modes like Arabish (a written code using numbers and English letters to represent speech) and Local Arabic (a spoken code without a written form) in close proximity shows relationships. In sum, this model highlights the dynamic ways one or more languages are used on a daily basis.

8.2.1.7. Towards a conceptual model of Linguistic Pluralism

This model can be adapted to multilingual contexts by shifting the focus from practices of linguistic variation to language awareness in a speech community. As described in chapter seven, the participants expressed awareness that several languages other than English and Arabic belonged to the Abu Dhabi speech environment. My adaptation included adding triangles to signal awareness of other languages. The participants recognised the presence of several languages even though they did not rely on these languages for daily communication. Subsequent modification of each triangle can address changes in linguistic awareness. Changes to their scale and proximity to each other can evoke relationships among languages. Clear and dotted lines can intimate the clarity or intensity of linguistic awareness. By expanding the horizon line to make room for the peripheral languages, such as Persian, Indian, Korean, or

Tagalog, the model readily illustrates perspectives of Abu Dhabi's linguistic ecology, as reported in chapter seven.

Figure 4: Model of Linguistic Pluralism



A strength of this model shown in Figure 4 is that it can depict linguistic awareness. In so doing it can promote comparison to other Gulf contexts and highlight anomalies. An example of an anomaly could be the hybridised mode of Local Arabic with Korean words, stimulated by interest in Korean television broadcasts. A caveat is that it prioritises seeing each language as a homogeneous entity and does not illustrate the grey areas, like Arabic diglossia.

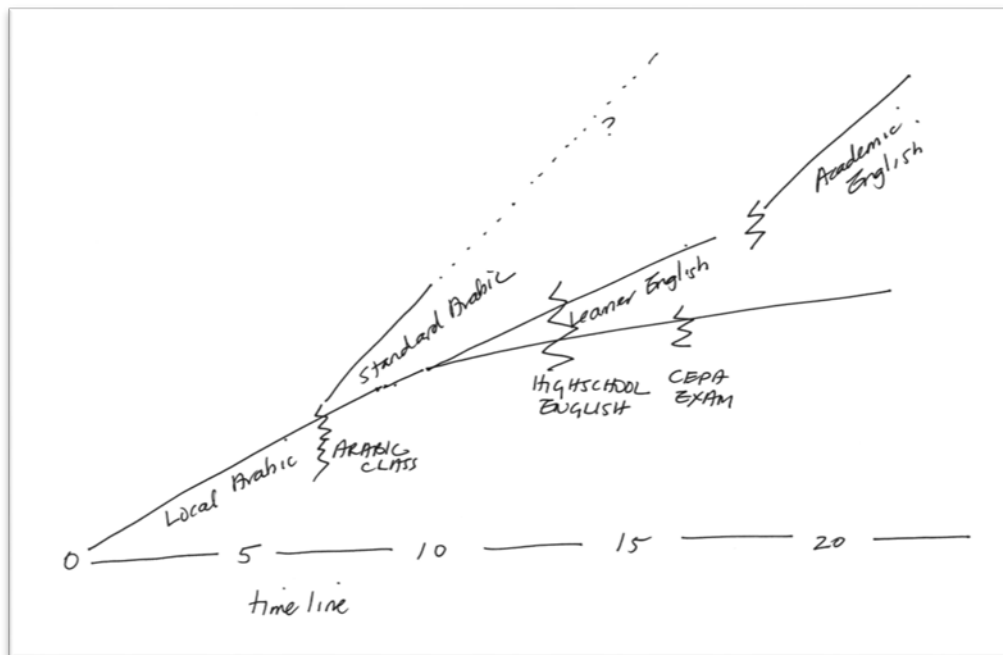
8.2.1.8. Towards a conceptual model of changes to a common language across a time line

I offer a further way to represent my findings on language use. A third model focuses on changes to a common language across a timeline. It draws on Berger & Luckmann's (1971) iterations of phases of socialisation and uses a chronological view to track languages used across a lifespan. This model features a time line representing types of conversational activity. It allows seeing how such activity unfolds across phases of socialisation. As noted in chapter four, language use is central in learning processes from birth to old age and its importance lies in "the accumulation and consistency of casual conversation" (p. 172). In *primary socialisation*, language use occurs primarily in the home during childhood. The language learned in this domain is posited as the mother tongue, although it should be pointed out that the concept of mother tongue is problematised in ELT discourses (McKay, 2002). In *secondary socialisation*, where schooling and higher education takes place (Berger & Luckmann, 1971), new ways of conversing with members of a broader speech community appears. Experiences with additional languages can constitute a phase of *tertiary socialisation* (Alred & Byram, 2002) since it relies on social experiences among intercultural others often in adulthood.

This formulation shows changes to the common language and locates first encounters with English. The model has several affordances and constraints. Firstly, it is relatively straightforward and amenable to survey formats. It is applicable to representing findings from large-scale research. It also enables comparing student experience of English within HEIs (e.g. according to departments), across generations of students in HE, and across HEIs in the Arabian Gulf, for instance. As mentioned in chapter two, generalisations across the Gulf are generated for

social and cultural reasons as well as for shared focus in educational investments. The model is helpful in showing common trends and contrasting starting points of English language exposure. The visual format allows a quick assessment of quality of linguistic input.

Figure 5: Changes to a common language



A caveat is that its focus on encounters with additional languages becomes visually complex if more than one or two sub-varieties are shown, as it does not represent patterns of linguistic variation. Although my research focus was not about timelines, it is possible to offer a loose sketch of phases of prioritised conversational activity from the narratives in the data, as shown in Figure.

In this section, I described three models which can enhance conceptualisation of English language use based on the perspectives of English and Arabic use held by 16 Emirati pre-service

teachers. I shared practical considerations and caveats for modelling the use of English according to its relation to Arabic, the place(s) of English in a linguistic ecology and its emergence as a common language across a timeline. To date, the literature has focussed on defining EMI in terms of the teacher's use of the language in non-anglophone countries where students use other languages (Dearden, 2014). My study offers a way to conceptualise EMI as a condition of educational institutions shaping conversational activity in English among students, their teachers and other interactants. I offer several ways of displaying the results of my research of student perspectives of English and Arabic use in multilingual academic communities in the Arabian Gulf. I argue that these models offer a productive way to represent the place of English in this microcosm.

8.2.2. Methodological implications

This section addresses methodological implications for Gulf-based qualitative researchers, who are interested in using focus group discussions and attending to the linguistic issues that arise when using English in an Arabic-speaking milieu. Given the increasing recognition of focus groups as a culturally sensitive research method in the Arabian Gulf, I offer two considerations based on my experiences to guide development of this research practice. I first discuss peer group constructions (Barbour, 2008). As a sampling strategy, it recognises student agency and then I comment on focus group size to suggest gains from a smaller group size. After that, I also highlight the importance of a reflexive orientation towards language issues and accounting for the linguistic profiles of the researcher and participants. I then offer insights gleaned from recognising available linguistic resources and discuss affordances as experienced in this interview context.

*8.2.2.1. Peer group constructions offers vital assurances of trust among
focus group members.*

When determining the composition of focus groups, purposeful or theoretical sampling is regarded as a key way of reaching a diverse range of participants (Barbour, 2008). However, my experiences revealed that pre-determined categories were unjustifiable for two reasons. First, this way of grouping participants into focus groups showed my biased ways of thinking as a teacher. Endemic to the profession, language teachers often group students by ability in terms of academic performance or linguistic achievement but the value of these categories for research purposes should be carefully reconsidered. It is likely that the college registrar had used these categories when ordering students into class sections, but these categories did not fully explain naturally-occurring ways that TTC students cohered into a range of social groups. Grouping students by academic achievement or English proficiency ultimately means one group is cast as the “weak” group, which could cause discomfort. From this vantage, I recommend prioritising the participants’ comfort over the researcher’s conceptions of homogeneity (Morgan, 1997).

In addition to caveats around researcher bias, focus groups based on pre-determined categories posed several pragmatic challenges at TTC. First, seeking information of potential participants based on academic achievement, age, or location of residence violated institutional norms around privacy. With no means of accessing a database to verify the status of students, an alternative option to ask participants for this information introduced a potential threat around notions of privacy and respect. My years teaching at the TTC made me cautious in asking students openly about grades and language test results as well as marriage and residence status. I sensed that residence provided clues about family status and tribal affiliations, which I remain

unclear about how to best address. My experiences counselling students on hurtful judgements made by others suggested that the content behind the social politics among the female students was private and confidential. An implication for Gulf-based researchers then is to be mindful of sensitivities around grouping people given complex experiences of social cohesion.

Instead of grouping students myself, I gravitated to my social network of students. Via friendly relationships established as their teacher, I requested the support of several recruiters, nominating one recruiter for each of the four sections. This approach had immediate tangible benefits. Firstly, my request communicated respect for their social and leadership skills. In turn, the recruiters lent credence to my study as a social engagement meriting attention. Secondly, the recruiter also shielded the potential participants and myself from awkwardness when refusing to participate. Thirdly, each recruiter provided logistical support by managing the group composition, location and timing. She also managed communication among members ensuring comfortable arrangements for all, apparently drawing on tacit knowledge of social groups and individual willingness to participate. Given concerns around confidentiality for Emirati women (Winslow et al., 2002) as well as caveats around assurances of confidentiality for focus groups ("CITI Program," 2016), my decision to use a recruiter to drive peer group constructions ensured a spirit of trust in the focus group discussions.

In addition, several benefits for data collection appeared. Firstly, new social groups came to light. Friendships based on a shared bus commute and hidden familial relationships, such as sisters or cousins, shed light on important social influences on how and when to use English. For instance, I learned that the daily bus commute was a domain affiliated with college life. This social space, peripheral to the campus, escaped my attention. Yet I soon learned it was a prime

social zone for initiating students of other year groups into TTC-flavour English. In addition, sisterhood among participants provided a ready-made sorority for study gathering in the home domain. In such cases, it seems that sisters from their father's other wives were also included. Accordingly, the home domain provided opportunities for sisters from the TTC to study with sisters from other HEIs with a shared focus on practicing Academic English. Furthermore, these study opportunities also revealed that the use of Local Arabic with English vocabulary was not limited to TTC students. It was a linguistic phenomenon students from other HEIs also relied on.

A second benefit is shown by EM's repeat appearances in the focus groups. Peer group constructions afforded EM the chance to nominate herself for two group discussions. Evidently, EM benefitted from time to reflect on my interest in her original contributions of mixing English and Arabic. As explained in chapter five, she nominated herself to return and elaborate on how TTC-flavour English worked. Furthermore, she also volunteered for a third chance to sit with me. These unanticipated, serial encounters not only provided an opportunity to conduct member-checks (Barbour, 2008) but also afforded invaluable insight into linguistic innovation and language play. In summary, these experiences show that peer group constructions offered a necessary ingredient of student agency for managing group arrangements. In addition, I recommend relying on recruiters who show sensitivity to social tensions. In my study, I noticed that their awareness of friendship groups provided supportive conditions for the collection of rich data, which, ultimately, lead to valuable insights into the participants' social worlds. For these reasons, I recommend peer group constructions for research designs involving focus groups in the Gulf.

8.2.2.2. *Mini-focus groups can be effective.*

Peer group constructions also had a bearing on focus group size. In general, focus groups as a research tool are often considered viable for use with ten to twelve members (Krueger & Casey, 2014) although Morgan (1997) suggests an ideal size is six to ten. However, Winslow et al. (2002) recommends smaller groups of four or five. Based on my teaching experiences, students grouped into threes and fours create productive conditions for conversation tasks. As mentioned in chapter three, a group size of five posed problems for group moderation and transcription in the PS, primarily because participants talked over each other. For these reasons, I recognised that a size larger than five would be unmanageable. Even though I asked for four to five members as per Winslow's recommendations, the recruiters themselves formed groups of threes and fours. During participant observations, I also noticed that TTC students gravitated in conversation groups of twos, threes and fours, suggesting that the smaller group size reflects friendship group structures at the college. An implication for future research is to recognise the benefits of a group size of three to four members, also called a mini-focus group (Krueger & Casey, 2014). Based on my experiences, I recommend peer constructions of triads or quads in focus group formats for ensuring comfortable and robust group discussions.

8.2.2.3. *Accounting for linguistic reflexivity entails acknowledging affordances and constraints in terms of language use and language choices.*

Some of the linguistic dynamics the participants described reverberated in my interactions during the conduct of the study. I recognise that, to some extent, I am still processing

the significance of how language use and language choice constrained and benefitted the study. My early readings about qualitative research in the field of ELT pointed out shared concerns about the rigour of ELT research publications when accounting for the personal and professional relevance of the research question and its epistemological grounding (Chapelle & Duff, 2003; Harklau, 2011; Richards, 2009). My take-away was to focus on accounting for decisions taken particularly during the planning and writing stages (Holliday, 2009). ELT discourses rely on concepts of criticality and reflexivity to address expressions of power and appropriate actions. However, as a teacher of ELT methodology and a researcher of English in the Gulf, I recognised that I needed a concept of “linguistic reflexivity” to address a range of hidden expectations about language use, namely social politics concerning ways of using English and Arabic. Penner (2013) uses “linguistic reflexivity ... [because of an] “inherent capability to use it [language] to discuss or describe language itself” and pointed out that ELT discourses are rich in understanding how language use is managed and achieves certain results. I realised I needed such a methodological concept as a qualitative researcher to account for the strategic actions taken in respect to my own and my participants’ linguistic capacities.

At the time of initiating the study, I was not aware of the multilingual dimensions of the research process. I recognise that I am still not fully aware. Yet the importance of the “processes and practices of researching in contexts where more than one language is involved” (Attia, 2011, p. 1) signals a vital direction for language-based research. This agenda uses “praxis, ... researcher reflexivity ...[and] relationality” (Attia, 2011, p. 1) to scrutinise the ways of thinking about the linguistic dimensions and linguistic resources in various institutional settings and, where possible, ways of affecting a change in thinking about language use when researching. To date,

this is an agenda open for doctoral researchers, such as myself, to contribute transparent accounts of decisions made in respect to language issues. Accordingly, I see my contribution to this agenda as a means of stimulating greater disclosure of linguistic constraints and affordances among qualitative researchers in the Gulf working in English and Arabic.

As identified in chapter four, my original proposal concerned English only. English, unlike Arabic, is a subject of my disciplinary training. English is also a language, where my linguistic competencies underscore my employment opportunities. Local Arabic is a language, my students speak, but I cannot use primarily due to lack of time and training opportunities. My proposal with a stated focus on English, and not Arabic, tuned out to be a barrier for gaining necessary permissions to conduct the study. In my case, overcoming this situational constraint required engaging with Arabic-English bilingualism. I now realise the dual language focus has become an asset to the research study. However, one stipulation was to use bilingual consent forms to explain the parameters of the study to the participants and clarify options to withdraw. I duly hired a translator who used MSA and created a professional document with English on the left (for reading left to right on the page) and Arabic on the right (moving right to left). Students duly read the document and signed it. I noticed after the fact that all forms were signed and checked on the English side versus the side with MSA. This dimension of literacy practices evidenced during the data collection phase deserves more attention.

During the discussion groups, particular constraints and opportunities appeared. Different expectations appeared when asserting my membership status as an English-speaking in-group employee at the college, a non-Arabic speaking out-group older woman, and an in-group hopeful as someone who experiments with Arabic code-switching. While transcribing, particular

affordances as a non-Arabic speaker came to light. For instance, as an interviewer, I sounded comfortable, earnest and uninhibited when asking questions, such as “What language do you use at home?” and “what languages do you experience on a daily basis?” Undoubtedly, my experience as an English language examiner provided significant practice. The way I asked these questions conveyed that the participants were experts about a complex issue without an obvious answer. The participants duly responded by prioritising the complex ways they used two languages and the sense they made of such practices.

However, constraints, manifest as awkward moments, appeared when I attempted to emulate code-switches as I heard my students do. In one striking extract, I used my “Broken Arabic” and confidently inserted “Khaleeji Arabiya” into a question instead of the English variant, “Gulf Arabic”. The effect was a moment of confusion before the participant rejected my question with this expression. I believe my pronunciation was intelligible. I suspect that she did not expect me to code-switch in this way. Perhaps she found it inappropriate that I tried it given my academic role even though previously a different participant had used “Gulf Arabic” in English to signal the same meaning I tried to evoke. Perceptions of the appropriateness and inappropriateness of code-switching behaviours also deserves more attention.

In addition, I noticed other efforts I used to signal an in-group orientation. One means was accommodating the participants’ way of speaking. Accommodation theory is well-developed to deal methodologically with the relationship of social context to patterns of communication. For instance, Giles, Coupland, and Coupland (1991) offer relevant terminology of “sociolinguistic code, style and strategy selections” (p. 1-2). When transcribing, I noted several instances when I used incorrect grammar, such as “Which language do you experiences [sic]

every day? (MV, FG2, 27) and unusual collocations, such as “mother language” (MV, FG2, 31) rather than “mother tongue.” These irregularities passed unnoticed by the participants.

Elsewhere, however, I used my familiarity as role as a teacher and role model of English to deploy a form of indirect error correction, which the participants noticed. One example is when EQ spoke about the use of “Filipino” in her home and I recast with “Tagalog.” In the rest of the interview EQ favoured Tagalog. This effort conveyed that I was listening closely and her use of this new word conveyed her familiarity with – and acceptance of – our established interactional patterns as teacher-student.

It also struck me that the participants used a range of linguistic resources to manage gaps in my understanding. These includes story telling practices to help me feel the emotional intensity of an experience. Despite flawed grammatical constructions, AM narrated a compelling experience of failing her Foundation year. When beginning the narration, she addressed me as the listener, but mid-sentence, she took on the authorial voice of the Arabic-using teacher, modifying pitch and speech volume to dramatise her status. Her tone then changed. I recognised that, in her mind’s eye, AM replaced me with the Arabic-speaking teacher. I also felt this interaction served AM cathartically. It afforded her the chance to say all the things she held close in her heart to me as if I were her imagined bilingual teacher. In so doing, she positioned me to empathise with her and understand her appeal for the use of English-only at that time. Despite my interest in how she hybridised the languages she knew, she helped me understand that Arabic use at that time was a disservice. It held her back from her achieving her goals. Similar patterns of role-playing also appeared elsewhere, but with a different effect. On several occasions I was addressed as the problematic English-speaker. For instance, FH spoke to me as if I were the

author of English books with suspect notions of Arab women. In another interview I became HD's English-speaking mentor teacher who criticised her unjustly.

A further linguistic resource was on-the-spot translations. This was a resource that both the participants and I employed. Frequently, the participants explained they performed translating roles during their school internships and at home, which they also demonstrated in our sessions together. In several instances, the participants told me the expression in an Arabic mode or hybridised modes, followed by an explanation of its meaning in Academic English, and examples of key structural features and grammatical processes. In turn, I supplied the technical word, if needed, about the type of morphological change it was, recognising this as shared academic understandings in a TTC course.

Such interactions deserve space since they highlight the linguistic resources we bring as researchers and willing participants. I consider my emergent awareness of strategic ways of using English and Arabic in this speech event as a form of linguistic reflexivity. Despite our varied linguistic profiles as researcher and participants, the strategic ways we used the languages we know to achieve certain outcomes warrants calling into practice a methodological concept ripe for further development, particularly by fellow Gulf-based researchers dealing with varied repertoires in English and Arabic. Such a concept should be independent of ascriptions of linguistic profile as native or non-native speaker and instead focus on developing and evaluating the ways languages have been used strategically in the data collection process.

8.2.3. Pedagogical implications

In this final section, I discuss pedagogical implications based on the participants' perspectives as students using EMI at the college. In this section, I acknowledge insights gleaned from my teaching and researching roles at the TTC but endeavour to take a step back to discuss three aspects: 1) labels for English-using teachers at TTC; 2) expectations around mastery of Academic English and quantity of English interaction on campus; and, 3) expectations around English use in the classroom. Because of the participants' interest in other languages, I also consider ways that linguistic awareness can be enhanced. While other HEIs in the region may not share the same orientation to train future teachers, it is my hope that my interpretation of the participants' linguistic experiences will resonate for educators in similar contexts and foster a fresh look at the significance of using English and Arabic in educational domains.

8.2.3.1. The participants appreciated their teachers yet used awkward in-group and out-group constructions informed by linguistic profile.

In general, the participants positioned themselves as Emirati pre-service teachers, who recognized their roles within a broader vision of educational reform. Studying in an English-medium environment with English-using teachers provided vital access to professional knowledge and skills. Using Academic English underscored their professional capacity as future EMTs. The participants also recognised their unique contributions as bilinguals. By and large, their TTC teachers were seen as supportive during the four-year period of intense socialisation. They spoke well of their teachers and showed a respectful familiarity by identifying them by title and first name. However, as shown in chapter six, the participants categorised their teachers into

groups, using dichotomous terms based on linguistic profile. The choice of labels suggests in-group and out-group associations, and is an area deserving further scrutiny.

As explained in chapters two and five, the linguistic diversity of the TTC community reflects broader population dynamics in Abu Dhabi. Their teachers, including myself, represent more than 25 different nationalities and a wealth of international experiences. Within the UAE literature base, a similar trend to dichotomise teachers appears. To some extent, a lack of population statistics gives rise to unsystematic labels for English-users, but the judgmental slant is concerning. Labels such as “native English speaker” and “non-native English speaker” (King, 2013; McLaren, 2011) rest within broader critiques of the “foreign presence at university faculty level” (Lootah, 2011, p. 37). The prevalence of in-group and out-group constructions seem to pivot around foreignness as a form of cultural contamination (Davidson, 2005) and set up awkward polarities. A further example appears in an assessment of the discriminatory ELT hiring practices in the Gulf. Ali (2009) documents the appeal of native-speakers with “western faces” (p. 38) and denigration of the “brown man” (p. 34) in an endeavour to address social inequities among English-using members within “the colourful expatriate communities” (p.36) in the Gulf. Yet Ali neither accounts for how English-using teachers relate to each other in educational domains nor examines how this plays out when among Emirati students in English-medium contexts.

The findings in my study confirm the prevalence of dichotomous labels but they challenge the evaluative basis. The participants offered descriptors of “bilingual,” “Arab” and “Arabic” to contrast with “English” and “foreign” when designating who their English-medium teachers were. The participants’ choice of labels are awkward constructions lacking overt

assessments of relative worth. They also shared expressions of satisfaction with their teachers as a general group. A similar tendency to classify people by linguistic profiles compares with other designations of “Arab” and “Westerner” to distinguish Arabic-medium from EMTs in Abu Dhabi schools (Pennington, 2015). There is scope to revisit the assignment of labels for teachers based on their contributions to the workplace, which also respect distinctions based on linguistic profile.

However, as noted in chapter seven, other fuzzy labels appeared. I heard “Local English” and “international English” as well as unclear meanings attached to “foreign.” Labels for Egyptian English and Indian English signpost accents based on approximations of national identity or geographical proximity. Yet labels my colleagues and I use within the organisation rely on position within academic or administrative divisions. The participants did not use these types of labels choosing instead to identify their teacher by name or by linguistic interactions. Such labels often appeared alongside comments about a genuine appreciation for the help that their TTC teachers provided.

An important implication is to recognise this relational bond between teachers and students as a necessary form professional socialisation. Feedback from another study I conducted at the TTC conveyed a similar relational bond prompted by responsiveness to the overarching vision of the college (Van Den Hoven & Litz, 2016). Designations of “English user” and “bilingual” relied on interactional opportunities at the TTC and, perhaps, reflect a paucity of other suitable descriptors for their teachers’ identities. A consideration then is to assign linguistic awareness and respect for social diversity as a learning outcome at the TTC. Subsequent steps

via curricular and extracurricular initiatives could then address this aspect of community building and professional socialisation.

Patterns of contractual employment for international academics will continue to see mobile educators on a “brain train” (Knight, 2009, p. 116) but if better harnesses as a “brain gain” for the local context, limited term, contractual TC teachers can be used as a valuable resource for intercultural learning. This should be seen as an immediate opportunity which is temporary in duration since young Emiratis may soon earn relevant degrees and take up these academic posts in greater numbers. It is possible now to create a learning environment which actively promotes linguistic awareness and respect for linguistic diversity by capitalising on students’ apparent interest in various languages they recognise as important to the UAE (e.g. Hindi, Urdu, Farsi and Tagalog and Filipino), and other languages they want to learn more about, (i.e. Korean). To this end, elective language courses, language clubs, linguistic diversity events and language research assignments, which highlight their teachers’ unique contributions and connections with other members of the Abu Dhabi speech environment, are offered as vehicles to address this dimension of intercultural awareness. An important aim of such an initiative would be the promotion of richer ways to describe key people in Abu Dhabi communities.

8.2.3.2. The participants had limited time to talk in Academic English inside and outside of classrooms.

A repeated concern was the challenge of mastering English and achieving requisite scores on the IELTS exam to qualify for employment. To graduate from the college a minimal requirement of band 5.5 is needed, but employment at ADEA requires a higher score of 6.5.

Despite ample opportunities to use English in daily life, IELTS test mastery was a source of stress. TTC's offerings of six to eight hours a week of General English and IELTS English courses has not lead to the desired result. The participants' accounts also show limited and constrained opportunities to interact in Academic English in content courses. In these classrooms, they suggested that in class they mostly listened, and when they spoke with each other they hybridized English and Arabic. Although presentations afforded valuable opportunities to talk in sustained Academic English; presentations were limited to about ten minutes once per course. To this end, hybrid ways of modifying language dominated conversational activity at the TTC and daily life did not provide significant opportunities to interact with educated English users. While the scope of the study does not concern achievement in MSA, similar issues appeared for Academic varieties of Arabic.

From my participant observations, I also noticed that the participants had limited or constrained opportunities to talk at length with teachers and other administrators outside of classrooms. Teachers and students rarely mixed in the cafeteria, for instance. In addition, there were no common areas for casual conversations, such as campus coffee shops or exercise areas. My observations of hallway interactions were furtive and hurried. In my discussions with the participants, however, they did not blame the teachers for being too busy to talk as they participants acknowledged their own busy schedules of assignments.

Related to this, I noticed a willingness and readiness to talk at length with me during the scheduled discussions and interviews. It struck me that the reasons given for participating were IELTS test preparation. I see now that interaction with their teachers gives rise to formal interactions in "Academic English". An implication for the TTC management then is to re-vision

the physical spaces as zones of academically-productive conversational activity. The TTC, as an English-medium environment, should prioritise meaningful opportunities to speak in Academic English with the faculty and administration. I now recognise the value of increasing student-student and student-teacher interactions outside of the classroom domain for their value as academic socialisation. In addition, encounters with non-Arabic speaking international students can also foster a need for student-student interactions in Academic English in this domain.

8.2.3.3. It is timely to feature more open discussion about the value of English-only and code-mixing.

The participants admitted they hybridised the languages they knew and showed a range of orientations to these linguistic practices. For instance, AM displayed a range of emotions to these practices. I detected pride at inventing a hybridised mode with her peers, shame about how spoken Arabic dialects have been changed by loan words from other languages, and anger and resentment at a teacher who relied on Arabic at the expense of her English language development. It remains to be seen how she uses English and Arabic in classes of her own given her concern that young children need clear boundaries around when and how to use English and Arabic.

My general impression from AM other participants is that they were beginning to identify when classroom interactions should be conducted in English only and when Arabic can be used to facilitate learning. It also struck me that the focus groups and interviews were the first opportunity to discuss this topic at length. Although the literature on translanguaging practices in education is young, it is important to hold open discussions about how bilingual teachers use

language in classrooms and to what effect. Other participants at the TTC cautiously identified that all teachers used English to teach but many did advocate English-only practices. It seemed that their teachers, regardless of linguistic profile, regarded Arabic as a resource for learning in their English-medium classrooms. However, few participants openly discussed their teachers' linguistic behaviours, suggesting some reticence in talking about this topic, a theme discussed elsewhere as a social taboo (Carroll & van den Hoven, 2017).

In sum, this section addressed the theoretical, methodological and pedagogical implications of the study for different stakeholders. I offered three ways to model the place of English, namely as 1) a set of conversational activities in educational domains, 2) as a language experienced in a wider speech community, and, 3) as a language encountered during a life span. I also discussed methodological implications for the use of focus group discussions in the Arabian Gulf, and the importance of engaging with linguistic reflexivity. I also offered practical suggestions for promoting conversational activity among teachers and students, which respond to the themes of linguistic awareness, mastery in Academic English and translanguaging practices.

8.3. Limitations

The findings presented in this study should not be interpreted as representative of all Emirati pre-service teachers or all Emirati students. Furthermore, it should not be assumed that all students share homogenous experiences and sentiments. Accordingly, a limitation of the study falls within parameters of qualitative research where discussion groups and ethnographic interviews produce “situated understandings grounded in specific interactional episodes” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 353). As explained in chapter four, caveats around truth claims

merit distinctions between descriptions and universally valid theoretical explanations. Via my participation at the TTC, I endeavoured to establish an honest, detailed and reflexive account of the research process in a specific microcosm. It is my hope that my representation of the perspectives of 16 participants will engage readers as insightful descriptions and will esteem them as credible and showing trustworthiness, or verisimilitude (Holliday, 2009). In so doing, I leave evaluation of the relevance of the findings and its transferability (Kuper, Lingard, & Levinson, 2008) to the readers. It is my hope that their evaluation of the research methods and procedures taken can then be evaluated in terms of credibility of the descriptions and explanations offered.

The study also bears the imprint of my own personal dispositions and disciplinary interests. These experiences offered access to particular bodies of knowledge and ways of interpreting. Had I had a stronger training in English or Arabic Applied Linguistics, for instance, I would have been able to undertake the study differently. However, my own linguistic incompetence in Arabic invited the participants' on the spot translations of certain utterances in Arabic. In this sense, my linguistic incompetence in Arabic provided opportunities for the participants' competencies in managing communication to come to the fore. In addition, my own scholarly interest in World Englishes led me to begin by asking questions about varieties of English. It is also possible that several participants knew I lived in Korea and could speak some Korean and, so overstated their interest as an appeal to establish common ground. However, as Holliday (2009) puts it, people are not cultural dopes but skilled culture users. In addition, I also accepted the participants' focus on oracy. Even though I recruited an avid reader in a second

stage of sampling, the study is limited in scope to speech practices and leaves other literacy practices as considerations for future research.

8.4. Future research

Our understanding of the implementation of EMI in the various HEIs in the Arabian Gulf remains limited. According to Gitsaki (2011), there are over 200 HEIs in the oil-rich Gulf states, investing in western-influenced educational reforms, but little research evaluating the outcomes. This study has initiated description of the experiences of some Emirati students who use EMI in HE and it has proposed social constructionism as a theoretical framework for describing conversational activity in English and Arabic in educational domains. However, more intranational and regional comparative studies into how English and Arabic feature in educational environments is necessary to track changing patterns of societal bilingualism among various student groups in the Arab world.

The core questions should remain a focus: What does English mean to the various users of English in their local contexts? Who speaks English to whom, where, when, why and how? What other social influences affect these meanings and practices? One pathway to address the dearth of qualitative research on ELT in the Middle East (Harklau, 2011) is to extend this investigation to other student populations. On the strengths of this study, I recommend other research studies using similar methodology targeting diverse student profiles within the UAE and beyond. I also recommend a closer look at gendered dimensions of conversational activity in co-educational HEIs and research concerned with identifying membership categories (Fitzgerald, 2015). Such

research should take important cues from the contributions of Saiegh-Haddad and Spolsky (2014) on Arabic diglossia and literacy practices.

On the basis of my years residing here, I recognise the diversity of students and programme structures and the contributions that further studies with a comparative focus could yield. Other public, non-federal institutions share the emirate's priority in educational reforms but with a different professional focus. For instance, Mohammed the Fifth University in Abu Dhabi is a cross-border collaboration with a Moroccan partner and uses Arabic as a medium of instruction and English as a foreign language to train Emiratis as Islamic scholars. In addition, a recently announced merger of three HEIs with a mathematics, science, engineering and technology focus ("Abu Dhabi approves merger of universities and billions in projects," 2016) will see disparate male and female students at Masdar, Petroleum Institute and Khalifa University integrating. Research targetting students from these HEIs would enrich examinations of how English is conceptualised and how it is used among students who study in Arabic, as well as those who rely on English to develop technical expertise in the science and engineering fields.

Given the steady influx of expatriate teachers in the years to come and a general lack of available information about Arabian Gulf norms, greater attention to gendered dimensions of conversational activity is warranted. For instance, mobile educators can stand to learn more about how female and male Emirati students manage groupwork in co-educational HEIs. Little is written about how male and female students manage these social tensions around gender segregation in respect to the emirate's vision for globally-minded, co-educational HEIs and pressures from conservative families. My study pointed to emergent themes of the female participants' discomfort and avoidance of talking about how they talk to men and in which

language, but a research focus on gendered language choices would likely yield interesting findings, particularly if digital communication is taken into account.

On the basis of the findings in this study, I also recommend more research into how English-users are classified and, for that matter, how Emiratis view themselves in relation to the world of international speakers of English in their neighbourhoods. A further complexity is interactions with Egyptians in Abu Dhabi since several participants reported interacting with Egyptians in English and not Arabic (AM, GA & EM, FG3, 201-225), such as at fast food restaurants (HD, II1, 32-35). As such, a closer look at particular interactions with Indians and Egyptians could yield interesting insights into how Emiratis understand their linguistic choices with other multilingual English-users in various public domains. To this end, there is scope to apply Membership Categorisation Analysis (Fitzgerald, 2015) to better understand how teachers are positioned in higher education in order to understand how people are configured in English-medium instructional contexts.

8.4.1. Final Remarks

This qualitative study targeted an era in the history of education in Abu Dhabi and investigated the perspectives of English offered by 16 female Emirati pre-service teachers. These Emirati women, as important stakeholders, were on the cusp of this educational transformation: They were preparing to use EMI in classrooms of their own. The findings shed light on the meanings they have of English in respect to its use as a medium of instruction and the social influences mediating their understandings. The study offered two main contributions to the field. The first identified a range of ways that English and Arabic are used, modified and incorporated

into the participants' linguistic repertoires, suggesting that the use of EMI reflects several discrete types of conversational practices. The second contribution highlights awareness of Abu Dhabi's rich linguistic backdrop. In Abu Dhabi, English and Arabic constitute foregrounded roles in a diverse and multilingual capital city where other languages are experienced and ranked in social importance. In summary, English is more than a resource serving pragmatic purposes and creative impulses, English is also a feature of Abu Dhabi as a social space. The themes shared in this study are intended to promote clarity of the sociolinguistic dynamics of a particular sub-group of Emirati pre-service teachers and their understandings of the use of EMI in HE and stimulate discussion about the ways in which English is integrated into daily life on this peninsula in the Arabian Gulf.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Research Protocol

Research Protocol - Text and questions to be read to the discussion group:

Thank you for participating in our study. We would like to ask you several questions that have to do with language use in the U.A.E. Please feel free to answer as you like; there are no "right" or "wrong" answers and we are especially interested in your opinions. We would really to know what you think as a speaker of Arabic and English in the UAE. We would like to ask you questions for you to discuss in a group. We are interested in the different opinions you might have. Your participation in our study will be kept anonymous, meaning we will not be recording any participant's name in connection with your answers.

1a. Which languages do you experience in your daily lives in the U.A.E. ?

- At school:
- In public:
- At home:

1b. In which situations do you use or hear English the most?

2. Do you perceive English as one language or do you feel there different kinds of English? What kinds of English are you familiar with (if needed give examples)?

3. Which English do you think is the most popular (most widespread/preferred) in the U.A.E? Can you give me any examples?

4. Which kind of English do you like best/prefer ? (Which English do you like to hear?) Why?

5. Which kind of English is easiest for you to understand? Why?

6a. Which kind(s) of English are best for school? (which kind do you consider the most correct/academic)?

6b. Which English do you try to speak/write? (why?)

7. Do you have any interesting stories about using English in the U.A.E. (the Gulf)? How do you feel about using English in the U.A.E. (as opposed to Arabic)?

8. Is there an Emirati way of speaking English? Do you have a name for it?

Appendix B

Reflection on Ethics

As an exploratory study, I had proposed that findings from the first phase would delineate the focus in the second phase and so on. Based on the streamlined ethics approval procedures at TTC, I encountered in the preliminary study, I expected a positive and swift outcome. I duly submitted a letter of consent with a two-page document, which outlined protocols for assuring anonymity of the participants and the safe protection of the data. It also included a brief summary of the research design. However, the result was not smooth. The same format was no longer acceptable.

The Ethics Committee stipulated 16 amendments, ranging from a bilingual consent form to significant revision of my epistemological framework, research proposal and research tools. In essence, the feedback indicated discomfort with an exploratory approach and an unfolding research design. Coupled with a temporary closure of the research office, the rejection further set back my schedule for a year until I was able to resubmit my proposal with a nine-page defense and addendum of three research tools. In sharp contrast, the applications for ethical approval in the School of Education at Durham University, much like the preliminary study application, was a streamlined two-page document. The delay reset my schedule but provided time to analyse the findings of the preliminary study for publication (See van den Hoven, 2014a). It also enlightened me about research governance during a period of tremendous organisational change, necessitating accountability on my part to justify particular research design choices (Barbour, 2008).

Appendix C

Ethics Approvals - Teacher Training College



1

RESEARCH PROPOSAL FEEDBACK Report Form (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE)

Date: 28 May 2012
Title of Research Project: <i>An ethnographic investigation of the perspectives of female Emirati pre-service teachers towards the use of English as a medium of instruction</i>
Name(s) of Applicant(s): <i>Melanie van den Hoven</i>
OVERALL ASSESSMENT:
<p>1. The scientific method or design of the study</p> <p><i>It is an ethnographic study that uses qualitative data to investigate the following research questions: What are Emirati pre-service teachers' conceptions of English as a medium of instruction (EMI)? What influences have shaped their conceptions of EMI? The tools in the proposed research study are participant observation, focus group interviews, individual interviews and reflective journal. The samplings of the participants have been clearly stated and the current B.Ed year 3 students will be considered as study participants. The tools used for the observation and interviews are included. Ethical considerations have been made and the design of the study has also been approved by the researcher's doctoral committee.</i></p>
<p>2. Contribution to the knowledge base and development of education in the UAE</p> <p><i>The research findings related to English as a Medium of Instruction for Emirati college and university students would add to the literature base on how English is perceived among Emiratis and the implications for higher education institution in the UAE and other gulf countries.</i></p>
<p>3. Its relevance in the UAE</p> <p><i>Since the medium of instruction in higher education institutions in the UAE is in English and as here are limited studies in this focus study, it is therefore relevant to examine the college students' experience of English and their conceptual understandings of English.</i></p>
<p>4. Is within the social and cultural context of the UAE</p> <p><i>The study aims to describe the ways in which students conceptualize English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in light of their daily communicative interactions at the college and wider social influences. The proposed study is within the context of the Emirati students in the college with wider implications in the UAE's higher education system.</i></p>

• **Strengths of the Research Proposal:**

The design of proposed ethnographic study is being guided and supervised by the doctoral committee at Durham University. The findings of the proposed study would enhance the understanding of current needs and expectations for English education and education in English how students in the local Arab context conceptualize English given its importance in higher education.

Improvement/ Suggestions for the Research Proposal:

Feedback in the form of recommendations and suggestions provided by the Research Committee were considered and resubmitted with clarifications and required information.

Recommendation– Please circle your overall rating of the research proposal

Rating	Approval Status	Comments if applicable
A	Approved	Approved.
B	Approved but amendments needed	
C	Not Approved in present form, resubmit after further work	
D	Reject	
Chair of the Research Committee (on behalf of the Research Committee members)		Date: 28 May 2012
Name and Signature: Dr. Lilly Tennant Lilly Tennant		
Dean, Academic (on behalf of Head and Director of Corporate Services)- Comments Dr Robert THOMPSON		Date: 28th May, 2012
Name and Signature: R. Thompson		
Vice Chancellor Prof. J. Menezakowski		Date:
Name and Signature: [Signature]		6th June 2012

Copy of the Research Proposal Approval sent to the Applicant, Dean, Head, and the Research Committee

Appendix D

Ethics Approvals - Durham University



Shaped by the past, creating the future

School of Education

3 May 2012

Dear Dr. Robert Thompson and the Research Committee at ECAE

Melanie Van den Hoven Request for Ethics Approval

I confirm that Ms Van den Hoven has passed the thesis proposal and has progressed to the thesis stage of her Ed.D. Her study of the use of English as a Medium of Instruction in Higher Education in the United Arab Emirates is well conceived and the research questions offer new insights and promising outcomes that will lead to valuable research, both in the TESOL context generally, and for English teaching in the UAE.

Ms Van den Hoven has applied to the Ethics Committee in the School of Education for permission to carry out the research and I expect that this application will be approved very soon. The School of Education at Durham University fully supports this study. Professor Carl Bagley, Divisional Director, Postgraduate Research, who is Melanie's second supervisor, is also fully supportive of her research. We are both very impressed with the quality of Melanie's work and the thoughtfulness she applies in preparing the data collection processes and recognizing the ethical issues. To date, she has demonstrated exemplary processes around ethics.

We are confident that Ms Van den Hoven will carry out the research competently and in an ethical manner and wish her success with her research. Therefore, we would be grateful for your support, and that of the ECAE, in her ethics request so that she is able to undertake the data collection for this very important and valuable research, especially in the context of the growing use of English as a medium of instruction in the United Arab Emirates.

Yours sincerely

Prue Holmes
(Chief Supervisor)
p.m.holmes@durham.ac.uk

Leazes Road, Durham, DH1 1TA
Telephone: 0191 334 8324

Fax: 0191 334 8311

www.durham.ac.uk/education

Brett Bowie

From: Melanie Van Den Hoven <mhoven@ecae.ac.ae>
Sent: Wed, 26/Oct/2016 10:25 AM
To: Brett Bowie
Subject: Can you scan this image for me as a pdf?

• SMITH J.C.

Inbox



May 31.

Dear Melanie

I am pleased to inform you that your application for ethical approval has been granted by School of Education Ethics Committee in respect of 'An ethnographic investigation of the perspectives of female Emirati pre-service teachers towards the use of English as a medium of instruction'

May we take this opportunity to wish you good luck with your research.

Best wishes

Sheena Smith
Research Office
School of Education
Durham University

Tel: (0191) 334 8403
www.dur.ac.uk/education

Appendix E

Focus Group Template (Protocol of Questions to Ask)

Focus group Schedule

To be read to participants: "Thank you for participating in my study. I would like to ask you several questions that have to do with language use at the college. Please feel free to answer as you like; there are no "right" or "wrong" answers and I am especially interested in your opinions. I would really to know what you think as a speaker of Arabic and English. I would like to ask you questions for you to discuss in a group. I am interested in the different opinions you might have. Your participation in my study will be kept anonymous. This means I will not be recording any participant's name in connection with your answers. Also if you would like a copy of the results I will be happy to share them at a later date."

Theme 1: Descriptions - Patterns of Conversational Activity in English & Domains of Use

1. Which languages do you experience in your daily lives here in Abu Dhabi?
 - At school:
 - In public:
 - At home:
- 1.1. In which situations do you use or hear English the most?
- 1.2. (Interactants & Degree of familiarity) Can you tell me a little about who you talk with in English...?
 - At school
 - In public
 - At home
- 1.3. (Context/Location) Where exactly? Who else is involved?
- 1.4. (Topic) What do you talk about?
- 1.5. (Frequency) How often?
- 1.6. (More detail) You say (Paraphrase.) Has it always been like this? (Paraphrase) When did this start/change?

Theme 2: Explanations - Conceptions of English and EMI & Rationales

2. You say you use English at the college. (Paraphrase) Given your experience at the college, what is English for you?
 - 2.1. Is this the same for the others in the group? (Address other students.) How do you regard English? Do you have anything to add?
 - 2.2. In your opinion, what does English do for you? AND/OR What does English have? Why do you say that?
 - 2.3. Do you think many others in the UAE hold the same opinion? Why do you think this?

- 1.1. Why do you think English is used at the college? If you could, is there anything you would change about how English is used?
- 1.2. How does English compare to Arabic in this regard? Why do you say that? What is Arabic for you? What does Arabic have? What does Arabic do for you?
- 1.3. You say (other language/variety) is used here. What are your thoughts about (other language/variety)? Should this language/variety be introduced in schools? Why do you think this?

Theme 3: Elaboration - Sources of Conceptions of English & Rationales (Critical Incidents)

2. You say that English is/has/does (Paraphrase). Can you tell me more about that?
 - 2.1. Where do you think you got this idea?
3. Do you think (paraphrase) this will ever change?
 - 3.1. When might it change?
 - 3.2. What will cause the change?
4. Do you think your family members share the same ideas? Do they have different opinions?
 - 4.1. Who exactly has this idea? What about the views of the younger/older generation?
 - 4.2. What kinds of things do they say?
 - 4.3. Why do you think they think that?
5. What do the newspapers/TV/media report about the use of English in schools?
 - 5.1. What views do you find there?
 - 5.2. What do you think about these ideas?
6. Have you heard any opinions about English which you disagree with?
 - 6.1. What are they?
 - 6.2. Where have you heard this?
 - 6.3. Why do you think they think that?
 - 6.4. In your opinion, what exactly is the problem with this idea for you?
7. Any other comments?

Appendix F

Observation Template (Blank)

Observation Template ____ **Date** _____ **Start Time** _____

Location: _____ **Task/Activity** _____

Objects involved

Drawing of Space and Participants and Researcher



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Interactants Comments (e.g. number/Student/faculty) **Language Mode** (e.g. English/Arabic/switching)

Fieldnotes

Start time_____

Appendix G

Fieldnote Example

9:30-9:35 Sept 18 2012	Hallways outside classroom	3 Ss sitting on a sofa talking in loud voices	<p>I encounter the students in the hallway during class time. I am not sure why the students are not in class and talking casually with each other. They don't seem to care that they are late.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S-S Arabic (several side conversations) • S-S Arabic with English "the details" "Writing Miss Fatima?" (shouting) • S-S Arabic with English: <i>Yella enna</i> "class"; <i>Leish</i> (why?) • S-S Arabic: (lots of body language) explaining, narrating something • video overhead "evolutionary practices" "process in place" • S-S Arabic and English "cuppachino +Arabic+ not chocolate"
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Appendix H

Observation Record Examples (3)

confessional

Observation Template 2

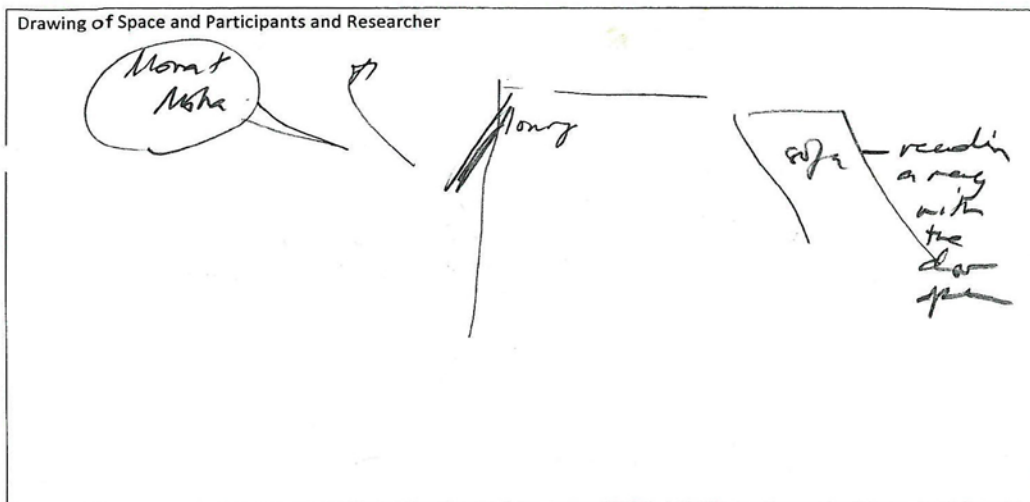
Date Sept 16 2012 Start Time 12:40-12:45

Location: _____

Task/Activity 1-1 conversation

Objects involved

Drawing of Space and Participants and Researcher



Interactants Comments (e.g. number/Student/faculty)

Language Mode (e.g. English/Arabic/switching)

Mona - faculty member female - English + Arabic - Teacher
 Maha explained a problem in Arabic - high pitched. Mona's voice was more stern + authoritative, till she laughed - in English, signalled by a 'catch up with you' laughter. I learned / overheard that Mona was giving advice to Maha - advice about how to communicate with an English-speaking male teacher - in her frustration with the Teaching + Learning Interaction.

skipping class?

Observation Template 4

Date Sept, 18 2012 Start Time 7:30-9:35

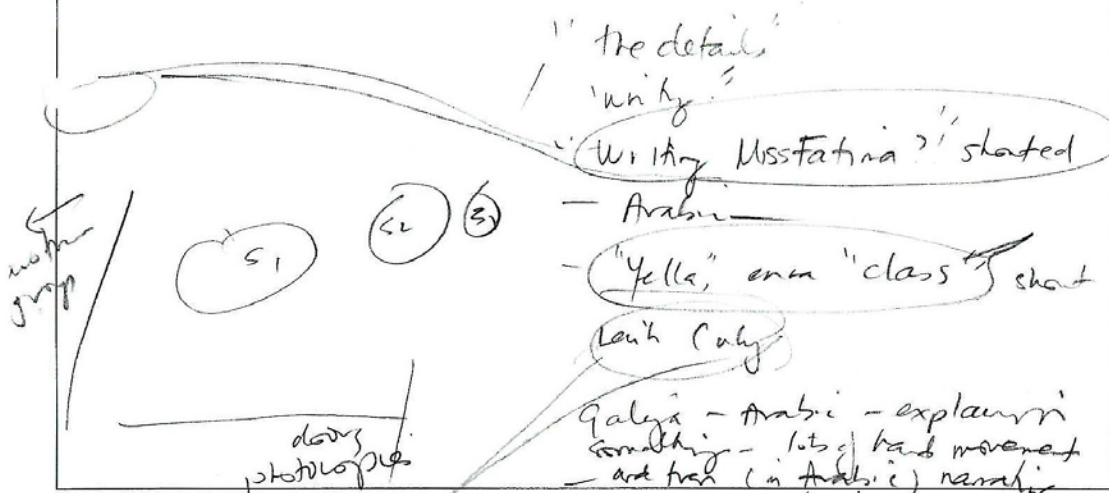
Location: hallway outside Rm 605

Task/Activity break time

Objects involved

sofas

Drawing of Space and Participants and Researcher



Interactants Comments (e.g. number/Student/faculty)

Language Mode (e.g. English/Arabic/switching)

3 students on sofa sitting - yea & just pl
talking

- low voices
- Arabic in different group

Several conversations

- listeners - video "authentic practice" (expectation) Arabic
"process in place" (not elaborate)

I'm not sure why the students are not in class. Sitting casually on the sofa. And leaning on the door with my hand on the handle. They don't seem to notice. I guess they are willfully late.

K

30 second

Observation Template _____

Date Jan 7 Start Time _____

Location: outside class

Task/Activity break time

Objects involved

sofa

Drawing of Space and Participants and Researcher

sofa
O O

O O
2 seated (female)
2 seated
Abeer
Zahra

I walked past the students during break at 9:30.

Interactants Comments (e.g. number/Student/faculty)

Language Mode (e.g. English/Arabic/switching)

4 students
Ses in the hallway -
outside class - 1 + talk to me -
were discussing school work -
"written interview"
"report"

Later 10 minutes later -
all the students

Education

Appendix I

Individual Interview Template (Returning Students)

Individual Interview Schedule

To be read to participant: "Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed again. I would like to ask you several follow-up questions based on our previous group interview. Please feel free to answer as you like; there are no "right" or "wrong" answers and I am especially interested in your opinions and explanations. I would really to know what you think as a speaker of Arabic and English. Your participation in my study will be kept anonymous. This means I will not be recording your name in connection with your answers. Also if you would like a copy of the results I will be happy to share them at a later date."

Theme 1: Descriptions - Patterns of Conversational Activity in English & Domains of Use

1. Last time, I noticed you made some of the interesting comments about the languages you experience in your daily life here in Abu Dhabi?
 - At school:
 - In public:
 - At home:
- 1.1. Regarding (paraphrase) I believe you said ...
- 1.2. Did I get that right? Did you mean...?
- 1.3. Can you tell me a little bit more about how you...?
- 1.4. I also noticed that when students use English at the college, they use it (elaborate on fieldnote findings)... What do you think are the reasons for this?

Theme 2: Explanations - Conceptions of English and EMI & Rationales

2. Last time, you described your experience using English at the college like (Paraphrase).
 - 2.1. Did I get that right? Did you mean...?
 - 2.2. I noticed that (paraphrase) can you tell me a little bit more about...?

Theme 3: Elaborations - Sources of Conceptions of English & Rationales

3. Last time, I recall you said that English is/has/does (Paraphrase).
 - 3.1. Do you have any other comments about?
 - 3.2. Do you still feel the same? What exactly has changed?

Appendix J

Transcription Codes

Representation system of interview features

MV= me

Emphasis - CAPITAL LETTERS

Pauses - very short (p), (pp) (ppp) = three sec pause

Interruptions - [

Overlapping speech - [M:]

Audibility problems [inaudible], [? – e.g. write what could have been said]

Noises (laughing, coughing, all participants laugh)

Tone of voice (ironic tone)

Direct speech - single quotation marks

Non-verbal communication (describe in brackets)

Arabic utterance – *shou hada* Note: italicise using English letters for Arabic sound

Appendix K

Transcript Extract

- HD: Ah, uhm, *boukra ana andi 'test'*. (knocking on door) I say like this. (0:04:41.8 minutes)
- M: Can you give me another example? (Cleaner - woman - speaks in the background)
- XX: Boy come.
- HD: Boy? Oh ok. Boy come. Okay. Okay. *Enzein?* (HD self-corrects from Local Arabic). Oh, okay? Ah, I say, uhm (p) Uhm - *lazem aru hel college, ashan isel am project*.
- MV: So this is how you use it with your sister [HD: yeah] and your sister is also in university, right? (rising tone).
- HD: Yes, Yes. (affirmative tone; HD fixes shayla).
- YY: Can I come in?
- MV: Where?
- HD: ~~Name—Name of institution~~ [MV: Ok your sister is at ~~Name of institution~~ .] Yeah.
- MV: And what does she study?
- HD: Ah, there are twins.
- YY: May I come in?
- HD: Yeah-yeah-yeah. (HD turns away from male)